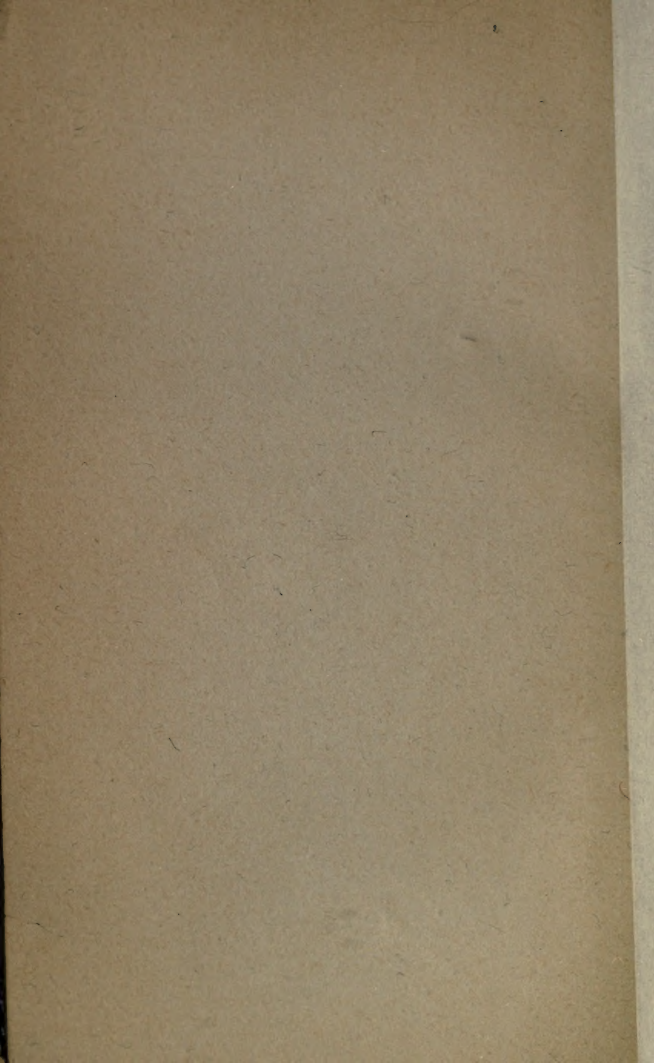
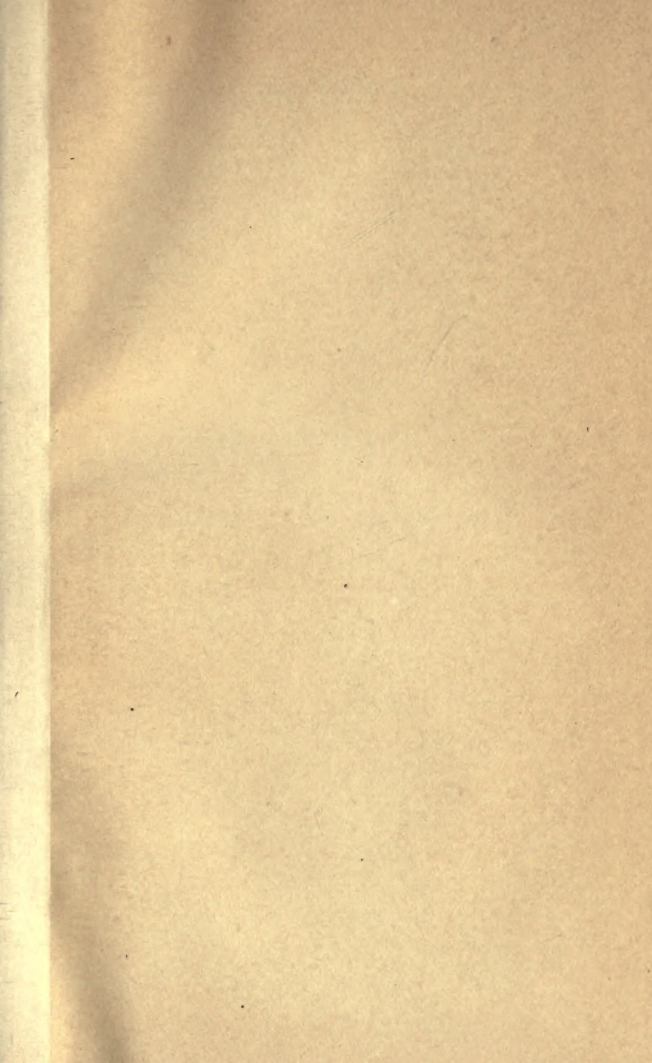



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THE JOURNAL
OF
EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN



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THE JOURNAL
OF
EUGÉNIE DE GUÉRIN

PUBLISHED WITH THE CONSENT OF THE
FAMILY

TRANSLATED WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

WILLIAM M. LIGHTBODY



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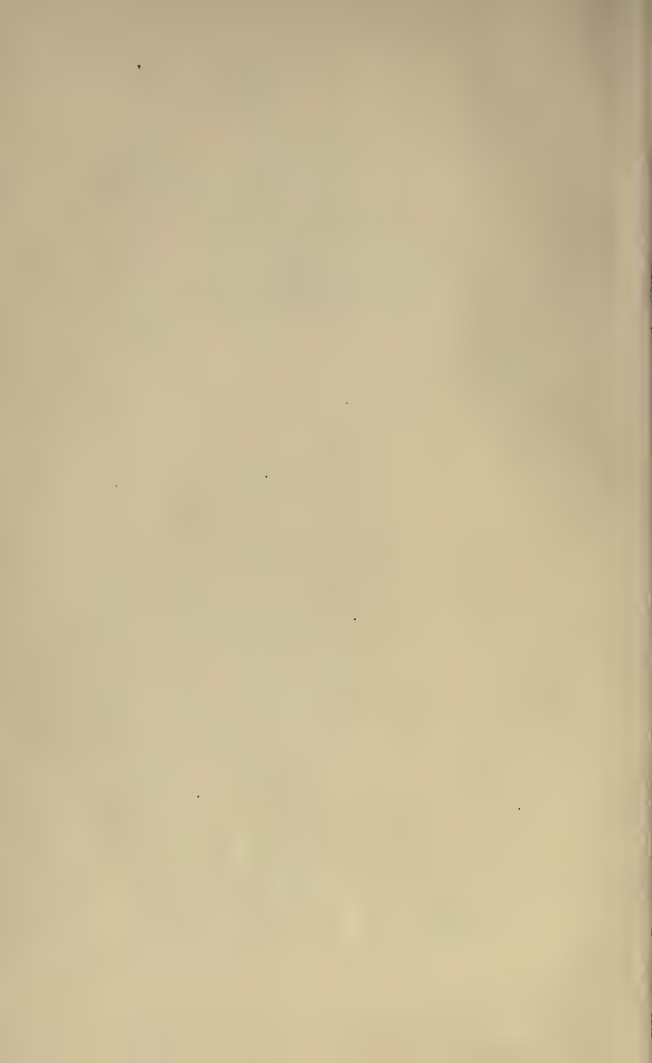
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INTRODUCTION

IT was only in 1862, fourteen years after Eugénie de Guérin's death, that her *Journal* was first given to the world. Since then it has achieved a wide popularity in France, and has taken a recognised place in modern literature beside the works of her gifted but unfortunate brother Maurice. Written originally without any thought of publication, it has the merits, and, it may be said, the faults of such a method of composition. The frank simplicity and intimate tone have a peculiar charm that we miss in most personal narratives intended for the outer world; whilst, on the other hand, some of the matter seems somewhat trivial at times, and there is a tendency to repetition.

We shall find in the book little in the way of episode or reminiscences of celebrities; but it possesses a supreme interest as the story of a woman's heart. It tells of her love for her brother, her grief at his death, her religious aspirations, sketches of her home life, her impressions of nature, all touched with a tender fancy and exquisite literary style.

The greater part of the Journal was intended for her brother Maurice, and, being written in a confidential tone, it takes much for granted as regards one's knowledge of the incidents referred to throughout the book. In order to understand these, the reader must be acquainted with the main facts both of Eugénie's own life, and that of her brother Maurice.

The De Guérins were an ancient and noble family, derived, it is said, from the Italian Guarini, and one of her ancestors, the Bishop of Senlis, had the task of marshalling the French army at the Battle of Bouvines. But, though of noble descent, the family was now by no means wealthy, the troubles that followed the Revolution having left them only the small estate of Le Cayla in Languedoc. Eugénie herself describes the humble château with its whitewashed rooms, the straw-bottomed chairs, and the equally primitive domestic ways. We have a charming picture of the father and children sitting round the kitchen fire, while Eugénie reads aloud "The Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church"; much to the wonder of the little serving-boy, who is appalled to think "how many words there are in the book." Or we see them supping in the kitchen on boiled potatoes and a cake of Eugénie's own making, with only the dogs and cats to wait upon them. Another night one of the peasants comes in to warm himself by the fire and to

ask their help in fixing his age, over which, it turns out, he had made a mistake of no less than seven years.

Eugénie was the eldest of four children, and Maurice, her favourite, was the youngest, being five years younger than she. The other children were Marie, often called Mimi, and a brother Érembert or Éran. There are few incidents to record in Eugénie's life ; it centred almost wholly, indeed, round the career of her beloved brother Maurice. They lost their mother when Eugénie was only thirteen years old, and the little Maurice was entrusted to her care, a trust she fulfilled with an unwearying devotion that is the most beautiful and most pathetic feature in her Journal. At an early age Maurice went to school at Toulouse, and afterwards to the Collège Stanislas at Paris, where he at first took up the study of the law. His abode during this time was in the Rue d'Anjou, at the home of his cousin Auguste Reynaud, who, with his wife Félicité, is often referred to in this Journal.

Thus from his eleventh year he was removed from his sister's care, but this in no way diminished her interest or affection. His spiritual welfare and his health never ceased to be her constant thoughts, and in both of these respects she was doomed to suffer deeply on his account. Traces of consumption showed themselves in him at an early age, and her

Journal betrays the constant alternations of hope and anxiety that she experienced. Now she tells herself the spring will restore him to health; now she dreads the approach of autumn, when the leaves fall and "the consumptives die." The period of religious doubt through which he passed was responsible also for much of her mental suffering. She cannot endure the thought that the brother whom she loves so devotedly should be a "lost soul," and though she refrains from reproach or serious argument, there is a note of regretful appeal that he could not mistake.

This temporary relapse from orthodoxy on Maurice's part was attributed by Eugénie to the influence of the Abbé Lamennais, a remarkable man, whose name will often be met with in these pages. Eugénie probably overestimated the influence of Lamennais' teaching on Maurice, just as she misunderstood the precise nature of Lamennais' propaganda. This was directed not against Christian doctrine, but against the temporal policy of the Church and the clergy. Whatever religious misgivings Maurice had appear to have been due rather to his own impressionable temperament, and to the powerful effect which nature in all her moods produced in him. Though deeply religious in his inner heart, he felt unable to reconcile the austerity of Christian teaching with the intoxication that sprang from his delighted

contemplation of natural beauty, and that fulness of life that contact with nature seems to inspire in certain temperaments. In this respect Maurice de Guérin presents many points of likeness with Keats.

At one time a firm believer in the mission of the Church of Rome, Lamennais had striven hard to bring the Church into a sympathetic attitude towards the democratic movements of the day, and to political progress generally. Not only did he fail in this, but, as was to be expected, he incurred the strong displeasure of the Vatican. Baffled and disillusioned, he retired to La Chênaie in Brittany, where he gathered around him a small group of disciples, among them Montalembert, Lacordaire and Maurice de Guérin, then only twenty-two years old. Thither Maurice went in the winter of 1832, on leaving the Collège Stanislas at Paris, but the following year the little community was dissolved by the Bishop of Rennes, and Maurice, after a stay of a few months with his friend La Morvonnais at Le Val d'Arguenon in Brittany, returned to Paris with the prospect before him of having to earn his own living. His sensitive and artistic spirit was strongly averse to literary hack-work of any sort, and the only means left him was to find work as a teacher. A humble post was procured for him at the Collège Stanislas, and a generous friend, M. Guemper, afforded some help. For

a few years he had to struggle against poverty and ill-health, and, though he continued to write, his work attracted little attention. He himself, indeed, showed a strange indifference to literary fame, and made little effort to publish what he wrote. During this time he endeavoured to conceal his difficulties from his relations at Le Cayla, and did not explain to them that the reason of his long absence from home on one occasion was the want of money to pay for the journey home. Eugénie, ignorant of the true cause, grieved over this seeming indifference, and complains in her Journal of his long periods of silence and his unwillingness to leave Paris for Le Cayla.

However, after an absence of five years, he spent six months at his home in the summer of 1837, greatly to his sister's joy, and we find many references in her Journal to the delightful rambles and talks they had together. His health improved during this time, and once more Eugénie's hopes began to rise. But apparently this was his last rally; for on his return to Paris the disquieting symptoms showed once more, and from that time onwards the disease made steady progress.

In 1838 Maurice married a young and beautiful Creole girl, Caroline de Gervain, whose fortune was sufficient to relieve him from all monetary anxieties; but it was too late to undo the work of those years of neglect

and hardship. Eugénie went to Paris to be present at the marriage, and there she spent a short time, seeing the sights and mixing in the literary society of the capital. Amongst others she made the acquaintance of Lamartine and Xavier de Maistre, and she appears to have created a favourable impression by her refinement and intelligence. Unfortunately this portion of her Journal has been lost, leaving a gap from September 29th 1838 to April 10th 1839. But we are able to gather a few details of her life in Paris from subsequent references in her Journal and from letters to her relations at Le Cayla.

This marriage was the last ray of sunshine in Eugénie's life. Very soon afterwards Maurice's health rapidly gave way, and it was plain that the end could not be far off. As a last hope it was resolved to bring him to Le Cayla, and no time was lost in setting out. Eugénie, who on her journey back from Paris had stopped at Nevers and Les Coques, joined Maurice and his wife at Tours, and thence the mournful little party made their way home to Le Cayla, reaching there on July 8th 1839. Book X. of the Journal, written six months later, contains a pathetic picture of their arrival at the old château, the home of his youth, and the painful impression produced by Maurice's pale face and wasted form.

He died on July 18th, eleven days after his

arrival at Le Cayla, and only eight months after his marriage.

This was the crowning tragedy in Eugénie's life, and from that hour till the end of her days she mourned for him with a grief that the flight of years could do little to soften. In Book X. she relates for his friend D'Aurevilly the story of Maurice's last days, and dwells upon the one consoling circumstance that brought her comfort even in the depth of her sorrow ; for Maurice on the morning of his death had taken the last sacrament of the Church at the hands of the Curé, and had formally renounced the doctrines of Lamennais. He was no longer a "lost soul," and she felt that their parting was not for ever.

On July 21st, two days after his death, and while his coffin still rested in the white salon downstairs, she began the continuation of her Journal, which she dedicated to "Maurice in Heaven"; and here she still poured forth her thoughts, all darkened now by her loss. There is probably nothing in the literature of any language more touching or more beautiful than these passages, written in the hours of her deepest anguish, in which she recalls the incidents of his childhood, and all the tender memories she had treasured through so many years of separation.

Thus the Journal is continued for other three months, at the end of which time it would

probably have been left off, had not Barberty D'Aurevilly, one of her brother's closest friends, begged her to continue it for him. This she consented to do, and the remaining portions until December 31st 1840 are addressed to D'Aurevilly, whom she calls her "brother by adoption." In these pages there are traces of an affection that one might suspect to be something more than fraternal; though Eugénie, doubtless, would have been the last to admit this, even to herself. We find passages also here and there, pointing, it would seem, to an earlier affection of which her cousin Victor, an officer in the Garde du Corps, was the object; but he died in 1829, and his was another of those precious memories that remained for ever enshrined in Eugénie's heart.

But Maurice is still the ever-recurring theme. She had grown indifferent to all worldly interests except those domestic ties that were yet left her, and her thoughts turned more and more to religion. She seems at times even afflicted with certain misgivings of conscience over her affection for those loved ones who remained, and there is a shade almost of self-reproach for this incurable mourning over her dead brother; as if these earthly regrets and affections might conflict with the all-sufficiency of her faith in God.

Her one aim was now to rescue Maurice's

memory from the oblivion into which it seemed fast sinking. He himself had always been careless of literary reputation, and until his death his writings had excited little notice. Many, indeed, had never been printed. In May 1840, George Sand published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* an appreciation of Maurice de Guérin, and shortly after this his strange prose poem, *The Centaur*, appeared, greatly to the satisfaction of his sister. Her efforts, however, to secure the publication of his Journal and other works proved fruitless, and it was only in 1860, twelve years after Eugénie's death, that they were printed at last, largely through the instrumentality of his younger sister Marie, and his friend M. Trebutien.

Eugénie de Guérin's Journal ends in 1840. A few letters and fragments take us up to 1845, but of the remaining years of her life she has left no record. She died at Le Cayla on the 31st May 1848, at the age of forty-three.

In 1862 her Journal was published, and since then it has not only passed through many editions but has gained the unstinted admiration of such critics as Sainte-Beuve and Matthew Arnold. It enjoys the reputation of being an "ouvrage couronné par l'Académie Française," and in one case, at least, time has endorsed the judgment of that body; for it promises to
- become in every sense a classic. If in Voltaire

France has produced the extreme of robust materialism, she can point, on the other hand, to Eugénie de Guérin's *Journal* as perhaps the most delicately spiritual work the world has ever seen. Her friend Barbery D'Aurevilly has compared her to an ancient muse, or rather a Christian virgin, holding her brother in her arms. "But what grace and divine passion in that mournful expression, which includes a whole existence and binds it so closely to another, for she reared him and she buried him! Eugénie de Guérin, dead, preserved the expression of her life. In her letters, where we always seem to see her with her arms round her brother's neck, she left a little of the immortality of her soul before taking it to Heaven."

WILLIAM M. LIGHTBODY.

salvation of his soul ; virtues that make us beloved of men ought to make us beloved of God. M. le Curé saw him every day, and no doubt he must have done more than see him. It was the Illustrious¹ who gave us this news, together with other stories current among the people of Gaillac, and I, to pass the time, read them, and think of her.

November 17th, 1834.—Three letters since yesterday—three great pleasures ; for I am so fond of letters, and of those who write to me. They were Louise, Mimi, and Félicité. That dear Mimi makes some sweet and charming remarks about our separation, about her return, about her dullness ; for she feels dull away from me, just as I feel dull without her. Every moment I see, I feel, that I miss her, especially at night, when I am wont to hear her breathing in my ear. That gentle sound lulls me to sleep. Not to hear it saddens my thoughts. I think of death, which, too, makes all things silent around us, which, too, will be a separation. These thoughts that come by night, spring sometimes from those we have by day. Sickness and death are all that people here speak about ; the bells of Andillac have rung nothing but death-knells these last few days. It is the malignant fever that makes its ravages as usual at this time of the year. We are all weeping for a young woman, the most beautiful, the most virtuous of the parish, carried off within a few days. She leaves a tiny infant that was still at the breast. Poor little creature ! It was Marianne de Gaillard. Last

¹ A name sometimes given to Mimi, her sister.

Sunday I went to press the hand of a young girl of eighteen who was on the point of death. She recognised me, poor girl, spoke a word, and recommenced her prayers. I longed to speak to her, but I knew not what to say; the dying speak better than we. How many reflections one might make on these fresh graves. O God, how soon we pass from this world. In the evenings, when I am alone, all these forms of the dead revisit me. I am not afraid, but all my thoughts are tinged with sorrow, and all the world seems as mournful as a tomb. Still, I told you that these letters had gladdened me; Oh! 'tis true, my heart is not mute in the midst of this anguish, and it feels only the more keenly whatever brings it life. Your letter has brought me a gleam of joy, nay, real happiness, by the good news with which it is filled. At last your future commences to dawn; I see you with a calling, a social position, a means of livelihood. God be praised! This is what I desired most in this world, both for you and for myself; for my future is linked to yours, they are brothers. I have dreamed beautiful dreams about this; perhaps I shall tell you them. For the moment, farewell; I must write to Mimi.

November 18th, 1834.—I am furious at the grey cat. The naughty creature has just carried off a young pigeon that I was warming at the fireside. The poor animal was just beginning to revive. I wished to tame it, it would have loved me, and there it is, all devoured by a cat! How many disappointments in this life! This incident and all the others to-day have taken place in the kitchen; 'tis here I make

my abode the whole morning and part of the evening since I have been without Mimi. I must have an eye on the cook. Father comes down sometimes, and I, seated by the stove or in the chimney corner, read him some passages from *The Antiquities of the Anglo-Saxon Church*. This great book astonished Pierril. "What a lot of words in it," he exclaimed. He is the most comical child in the world. One night he asked me if the soul was immortal, and then what was a philosopher. We were dealing with great questions, as you see. On my replying that it was someone wise and learned, he said, "Then, Mademoiselle, you are a philosopher." It was said with such an air of simplicity and frankness that Socrates might well have felt flattered, but it made me laugh so much that my serious mien, as became a catechist, was gone for the rest of the evening. The child left us a day or two ago, to his great regret; his term expired on St. Brice's day. Now he is to be seen gathering truffles, grubbing for them with his little poker. If he comes this way I shall go and meet him, to ask if he still thinks I look like a philosopher.

With whom do you think I was sitting this morning at the side of the kitchen fire? With Plato; I did not venture to say so, but my eye lighted on him, and I was anxious to make his acquaintance. As yet I am only at the first pages. He seems to me an admirable man, this Plato; but one of his ideas strikes me as singular, that is, placing health before beauty in the list of blessings that God has bestowed upon us. Plato would not have written that if he had consulted a woman. Do

you not think so? I do, and yet, remembering *I am a philosopher*, I am a little of his opinion. When one is ill in bed one would gladly sacrifice one's complexion and lovely eyes to get back health and to enjoy the sunshine. Besides, all that is wanted is a little piety in the heart, a little love of God, to make us abjure at once these idolatries ; for a pretty woman worships herself. When I was a child I would fain have been beautiful ; I dreamed of nothing but beauty, because, I said to myself, mother would have loved me more. Thanks to God, that childishness has gone, and the only beauty I long for now is that of the soul. Perhaps even in this I am a child just as before ; I should like to resemble the angels. It may be that this is a sin in the eyes of God, at the same time it is all the more reason for being loved by Him. How many thoughts occur to me, if I had not to leave thee ! But I must tell my beads ; the hour grows late, and I like to end the day in prayer.

November 20th, 1834.—I love the snow ; to see everything white has something heavenly about it. The mud, the bare earth, offend my eye, they sadden me ; to-day I can see only the outline of the roads and the little birds' footprints. Lightly as they touch the earth, they leave their little tracks which form a thousand figures on the snow. 'Tis pretty to watch these tiny red feet tracing them out, like coral pencils. Thus the winter has its beauties, its charms ; they are to be found everywhere if one knows how to look for them. *God diffuses grace and beauty everywhere.* I must go and see what attrac-

tions the kitchen fireplace has to show—sparks, if I have my choice. This is only a brief “Good-morning” that I bid thee and the snow on getting out of bed.

I had to set an extra plate for Sauveur Roquier, who came to pay us a visit. We had sweet ham, which made the poor boy lick his fingers. Dainties do not often pass his lips. That is why I wanted to treat him well. It is the forlorn, it seems to me, who have the most right to our good offices ; humanity, charity tells us so. The fortunate can do without, for it is to them that the world belongs. Things are made upside down.

No reading to-day ; all my spare time has been spent on making a cap for the little one. But if one only works, either with head or fingers, it is all the same in the eye of God, who takes account of all work done in His name. I hope, then, that the cap will do instead of a work of charity. I have bestowed upon it my time, and a little skin that the needle tore off, as well as the thousand interesting lines that I might have read. Yesterday, Father brought me from Clairac *Ivanhoe* and the *Siècle de Louis XIV.* That will be a stock of reading for some of the long winter nights. I am the reader, but in an irregular sort of way. Sometimes it is a key that is wanted, a thousand things, often I myself am wanted, and for a moment the book is shut. Oh ! Mimi, when will you come back to help the poor housewife who misses you every moment ? Did I tell you that I heard from her yesterday at the fair of Cahusac, whither I had gone ? How many yawns I left on that poor balcony. At last Mimi’s letter reached

me as if on purpose to cure my dullness, and that is the only nice thing I saw at Cahusac.

Yesterday I wrote nothing in this book ; better blank pages than mere trifles, and that is all I could have told you. I was tired and sleepy. To-day it is much better ; I have seen the snow come and go. Whilst I was getting the dinner ready the bright sunshine broke out ; no more snow. At present things are again turning black and ugly. What shall I see to-morrow morning ? Who knows ? The face of the world changes so quickly.

I come in a state of great contentment from the kitchen, where I remained to induce Paul, one of our servants, to go to confession at Christmas. He has promised me that ; he is a good lad and he will do it. Thank heaven, my evening has not been lost. What happiness if I could thus win a soul for God every day. The worthy Scott has been neglected this evening, but what book would have been worth Paul's promise ? It is ten o'clock, I am going to bed.

November 21st, 1834.—The day has begun gloriously, with summer sunshine and a balmy air that invited me to go for a walk. Everything tempted me to go, but I had only taken two steps outside when I stopped at the sheep-fold to see a white lamb which had just been born. I love to see these little animals which make us grateful to God for surrounding us with so many gentle creatures. Then Peter came, and I gave him his breakfast and chatted some time with him, without growing tired of all that talking. That is more than one can say of many

gatherings. The wind blows, all our doors and windows creak. It is a little mournful just now in my solitude ; the whole house is asleep ; we got up early to bake. So I have been very busy all morning with the two dinners. Then a little rest ; I wrote to Antoinette. That is all very trifling, no better than blank pages, but even though there were only a drop of ink here, it would give you pleasure to see it, that is why I am writing these words. Last night, I know not why, there has passed before my eyes only a succession of coffins. To-night I hope to have less gloomy dreams, and I am going to pray for them.

November 24th, 1834.—A break of three days, my dear friend. It is a long time for me, who dislike emptiness so much, but I have had no time to sit down. Since Saturday I have only looked into my little room in passing ; only now am I able to make a stay, and that is in order to write a long letter to Mimi and two words here. Perhaps I shall add a few lines to-night if anything new happens. For the moment everything is calm, outside and in, in the soul and in the house ; happy state ! but one that leaves little to tell, like peaceful reigns. My day commenced with a letter from Paul, he invites me to go to Alby, I give him no promise ; I should have to go out for that, and I am becoming sedentary. I would willingly take a nun's vows at Le Cayla. No place on earth pleases me like my own home. Oh ! the delicious word *home* ! How I pity thee, poor exile, in being so far from it, seeing thy dear ones only in thought, unable to bid us

"good-morning" or "good-night," living like a stranger, without a dwelling of thine own in this world, thy father, brother, sisters, all in another spot. All that is sad, and yet I cannot wish that it should be otherwise with thee. We cannot have thee beside us, but I hope to see thee again, and that consoles me. A thousand times I think on thy coming, and I enjoy in anticipation the happiness in store for us.

When I was near the mill a little maid from Andillac placed in my hands a letter from Mimi.

"Many thanks, my child," I said, "here is a sou for you."

She took it and stood waiting.

"What more do you want."

"Why, the letter."

"The letter is for me."

"Yes, but I have to give it back, and look," she said, laying her finger on the seal, "you have torn it."

And she gazed at me, quite amazed to see me laugh at that misfortune. At last, seeing I was resolved not to restore her charge, she bade me adieu. Then, seating myself on a sack, I read the prettiest and tenderest messages from my sister. There is nothing so spiritual as Mimi's good heart. She feels dull, wishes to see us again, finds the people uninteresting; we shall see her again on Friday. I am going to write to her again by Éran, who is about to pay his visit to the d'Huteaus. For my part, I feel lonely, isolated, living only half, it seems, as though I had only half a soul. I fancy at present that this is but lost time, that you will

not find anything in these pages agreeable enough to make you turn them all over. What will there be? Days, the one exactly like the other, some small fragment of a life that has no story to tell. I had better return to the cap that I was sewing. I leave thee then, my poor pen.

How beautiful the skies of Heaven must be. Such was my thought those moments I spent in contemplating the lovely winter sky. I am accustomed to open my window before going to bed, in order to see what sort of weather it is, and to enjoy it for a moment if it is fine. This evening I gazed longer than usual, the lovely night was so enchanting. But for the fear of cold I should be there yet. I thought of God, who has made our prison so resplendent. I thought of the saints who have all these beautiful stars under their feet. I thought of you, who are perhaps gazing at them just as I am. That could quite well detain me all night; yet I must shut the window on that beautiful view outside, and close my eyes under the curtains. Éran brought me this evening two letters from Louise. They are charming, enchanting, with wit, with soul, with heart; and all that for me. I know not why I am not transported, intoxicated with love. Heaven knows, nevertheless, that I love her. Such is my day up to the very last hour. All that remains is the evening prayer, and then to wait for sleep. I know not if it will come, it is far off. Possibly Mimi will come to-morrow. At this hour I shall have her; she will be there, or rather we shall be resting on the same pillow, she speaking of Gaillac, I of Le Cayla.

November 26th, 1834.—Yesterday I wrote nothing, I did nothing but wait. At last she arrived in the evening, that dear Mimi. Now I am happy, and begin again for the thousandth time what I have done, said, and thought since her departure. She relates to me countless things about our friends, about people, all that she has seen, and all that is delightful to tell and to hear. *Oh! the delight of meeting again!* Truly, it would be worth while to go away from time to time for the simple pleasure of coming back. Yesterday I began a letter to you, but I was not in the mood for writing; my whole soul kept going to the window. To-day I am myself again, and I am going to finish my page. That will only be after dinner, by way of recreation. First of all, I must say that I have just been enjoying the sunshine on the hillside at Sept-Fonts. It is one of my most exquisite pleasures, like all those that come from Heaven. But now that hillside is sad, one can scarcely see the place where the bench used to be. Not long ago some remnants were left, a few nails, but how quickly even remnants disappear! As I gazed, thoughtfully and regretfully, I seated myself on a fallen oak, which now has to serve me as a bench. That, at any rate, will not be blown away. There I waited for Mimi who had gone over the Pigimbert to carry some pomegranates to La Vialarette for Marie de Thésac. Why cannot I find a messenger who would bring you something!

November 27th, 1834.—I close St. Augustine, with my heart full of these tender words:—"Cast

yourselves on the bosom of God, as on a bed of rest." The beautiful idea, and the sweet repose we would find in life, if, like the saints, we could find rest in God ! They come to Him as children to their mother, and on His bosom they sleep, they pray, they weep, they dwell. God is the abode of the saints ; but we mortals know only the earth, black, dry, sad as a dwelling that is accursed. Nothing has come to-day, not even the sunshine ; only in the evening some crows came past. No walk, no excursion except in thought ; but mine does not wander abroad, it rises on high. For reading to-night we shall have only the reports of the famous Carret case, which engrosses the attention of the whole country. But I do not like things of that sort, and, in my opinion, there is nothing interesting in the celebrity of the crime. All the same I am going to read it. This wretch in his prison has written to Mlle. Vialar to ask for a copy of the *Imitation*. Such an idea in this active spirit gives some hope of a return to God ; but it is to be feared that this is only hypocrisy, as he still remains a villain, they say. Érembert has gone to Alby to be present at the debates, which are crowded. Whence comes this curiosity about monsters ?

November 28th, 1834.—This morning before day-break I had my fingers among the ashes, seeking some embers to light the candle. I found none and was going back to bed, when a small coal that came against my finger betrayed signs of fire, and here was my candle lighted. Our toilette and our prayers

finished, we were soon on the road to Cahusac with Mimi. That poor road, I have long traversed it alone, and how glad I was to have an extra pair of feet with me to-day. The weather was bad, and I could not see the mountain, that dear country that I gaze on so much when the weather is good. The chapel was full, at which I was pleased. I like to have plenty of time before entering, to open my whole soul to God. This sometimes takes long, because my thoughts lie scattered like leaves. At ten o'clock I was on my knees, listening to the most beautiful moral teaching in the world, and I came out feeling more worthy. The removal of a burden always leaves us lighter, and when the soul has laid the burden of its sins at the feet of God, it feels as if it had wings. How admirable a thing confession is ! What relief, what enlightenment, what strength I find within me each time that I have said "It is my fault !"

November 29th, 1834.—Cloaks, sabots, umbrellas, all the trappings of winter followed us this morning to Andillac, whither we went to spend the day, part of it in the parsonage, and part in the church. I love the life we lead on Sundays, so active, roving, varied. We see each other in passing, receive bows of the women we meet, and then as we trudge along we chat about the hens, the flocks, the husband, the children. My great pleasure is to caress these little ones, and to see them hide themselves, blushing, behind their mothers' skirts. They are afraid of *the young ladies*, as of everything unknown. One of these urchins said to his grandmother, who spoke

of coming here, "Minino don't go to the chateau, there is a black prison there." How does it come to pass that the chateaus have always inspired fear? Does it arise from the horrors committed there in former times? I believe so.

How pleasant it is when the rain falls softly from the heavens, to sit by the fireside with the tongs in one's hand, making the sparks fly. Such was my pastime a little while ago; I am very fond of it; the sparks are so pretty! they are the fireside flowers. Truly some delightful sights are to be seen among the embers, and when I am not busy, I amuse myself watching the phantasmagoria of the hearth. There are a thousand little forms of glowing charcoal, which grow up, change, and vanish, sometimes angels, demons with horns, children, old women, butterflies, dogs, sparrows: under the blazing fagots everything is to be seen. I recall one face, wearing a look of divine suffering, which my fancy pictured as a soul in purgatory. I was struck by it, and longed to have a painter by me. Never was a vision more perfect. Observe the logs, and you will agree that there are some beautiful sights there; that unless one is blind it is impossible to be dull beside the fire. Listen, above all, to the faint chirping that issues from beneath the coals, like a voice singing. There is nothing sweeter or purer, one would say it is some little fire-spirit who sings. Such are my evenings, my friend, and their pleasures; to these add sleep, which is not the least.

November 30th, 1834.—I have heard a strange story about a sick woman at Andillac. Having fallen

into a state of weakness, and remained as if dead for sixteen hours, she all at once opened her eyes and began to say, "Who has brought me back from the other world? I was between Heaven and Hell: the angels drawing me one way, and the demons the other. Heavens! what I suffered, and how terrible is the sight of the abyss." And, turning round, she repeated in a voice of supplication litanies of divine mercy, that have nowhere else been seen. Then she began once more to speak of Hell, which she had seen so near at hand during her fainting-fit. When she was told not to think of these frightful objects, "Hell is not for dogs," said she, "I have seen it, I have seen it." Was not that a dramatic scene, and a very true one? It was Françoise, the sister of M. le curé who told me, and she herself had sat with the sick woman last night. That woman was not particularly pious, but now she finds her full of faith, fervour and resignation. She wants no doctor but the curé; to the other she says nothing. Is it not possible to see the hand of God in this? Who knows all that a dying soul beholds?

Alors qu'à son regard apparait l'autre monde,

Alors . . .

But I do not wish to write poetry.

Listen to a beautiful miracle that I have just read. It is about St. Nicaise, who, while preaching to the Gauls, found himself in a country ravaged by an enormous dragon. The saint availed himself of this state of matters to show the people the power of the God he was making known to them. Giving his stole to one of his disciples, he sent him towards the monster, and the disciple not only bound it with

the stole, but led it in front of all the people, before whose eyes it died. I admire the *naïveté* of the narrative and the fine miracle, in which I believe. Now I must say good-night to Saint Nicaise.

December 1st, 1834.—It is with the same ink with which I have just written you that I write to you still. The same drop falling half in Paris, half here, is going to record for you various matters, here kindnesses, there troubles, for I always send you everything that comes into my head. I am sorry to have written you only a few words, I might have sent you this, and I thought of tearing out these pages. But if these were to be lost in the cabarets where maître Déleruc goes to refresh himself ! Rather keep our gossip for a surer chance. It will be then with the pie, if I can, without risk, put some papers in the box.

December 2nd, 1834.—I am angry at myself for being so simple as to believe that you do not care for us and for me. Absurd as the idea is, it has filled my thoughts and saddened me all yesterday. So you see how little I have told you ! The sadness renders me dumb ; forgive me, I would rather be silent than complain. It is your letter to Mimi that has done all that ; I shall tell you why. When you read this, my friend, remember that it was written on the 1st of December, a rainy, dull, tiresome day, without a gleam of sunshine. I saw nothing but crows, and read only one small letter from you.

December 3rd, 1834.—Nothing but the date today. No, I don't wish to let a day pass without

telling you something, if it were only to say good-night. It is seven o'clock, Mimi is stirring the fire, I hear the brook. That is all I can record for the moment, except a beautiful star that I see from here rising over Les Merix. You have not forgotten that hamlet.

December 4th, 1834.—Rare and kind visit: Madame de F. has just gone. We could not persuade her to stay more than a few hours, from ten to three. Her husband came with her and carried her off again in spite of all protest. He was obliged to return, and cannot do without his wife, any more than his eyes. Lucky woman, who knows how to make herself so indispensable! There she is near Bleys and here I am telling you she has come; it is a great event at Le Cayla, such a lady's visit, especially in this season.

I must write to Gaillac. It is to * * * that I shall write, not as I write to you or to Louise, full length and breadth, but briefly, in miniature. That is enough for one who wishes only to show that she is alive. The important points I reserve for my near friends. Two visits, two letters written, one received, is enough for one day. It is a lot for a day at Le Cayla. It was a fine day, and we went down to the meadow and enjoyed the sunshine as one would in the spring.

December 5th, 1834.—Papa set out this morning for Gaillac, and here we are, Mimi and I, left until to-morrow in sole charge of the house, and as absolute mistresses. This regency is not distasteful and

pleases me well enough for one day, but no longer. Long reigns are tiresome. I am content to give orders to Trilby, to succeed in making her come at my call and give me a paw when I ask it. Yesterday a nasty accident to Trilby. As she was sleeping peacefully in the chimney-corner in the kitchen, a pumpkin that was hanging up to dry fell upon her. Half dazed by the blow, the poor beast came running to bring her sorrows to us. A caress cured her.

It was night. A knock was heard, everybody ran to the door. Who is there? 'Twas Jean de Persac, our old tenant, whom I had not seen for a long time. He was welcome and, coming in, sat down with his plate and bottle. Then we made his tongue wag about how things go in his part of the country, about his wife and children. I do love those conversations and those meetings. To see those faces of other days is a pleasure ; they seem to bring back our youth. Yesterday I fancied myself back again in the time when Jean used to take me on his knee.

December 6th, 1834.—I made Jean promise to come again this evening : I shall see him once more, and then I want to give him a letter for Gabrielle : he is one of their tenants. Bri will not resent this unexpected remembrance ; I would have written her by the post, and I thus save her eight sous, so much more that she can give to the poor. There, then, is one good work that is due to me. Besides, to-day is a day of good actions. I come from Cahusac, and, as usual, wonderfully disposed for doing good ; to do wrong to-day would seem to me

impossible. Then it is a strange calm. Notice how peaceful my soul seems these last few days. And it is really so, for with you I make no concealment, and put on paper everything that occurs to me, even tears. When my report grows lengthy, it is a sign that I am at my best. Plenty of affection and of things to tell you, of what is going on in my mind. Often it is hardly worth while to speak of outside affairs, unless they should awake an echo in the heart, like a knock at the door. Then one speaks of them, however small they may be. Some piece of news, the noise of the wind, a bird, a mere trifle touches my heart and makes me write pages. If I would speak of what I must do to-morrow! But here prayers are better than words. God comes to us when we speak to Him, you are so far off. You do not hear me, and besides the time I devote to you is lost to Heaven. Almost all that one does for a fellow creature is lost unless charity is mingled in the deed. It is, as it were, the salt that preserves our affections and our actions from the corruptions of life.

December 7th, 1834.—Last evening was spent in talking of Gaillac, of this person and that, and all the gossip of the little town. I am not very fond of hearing news, but am always glad to hear of friends, and listen with more interest than to news of the outside world and tiresome political affairs. Nothing makes me yawn so much as a newspaper. It was not always so, but one's tastes change, and each day the heart detaches itself from something. Time and experience also rid us of our illusions. As we go

through life, we are at last in a better position to judge our affections and to perceive them from the proper point of view. First I see the dolls, toys, birds, and butterflies that I loved, the beautiful and innocent love of childhood. Then reading, conversation, dress, to some extent ; dreams, exquisite dreams !

. . . But I don't wish to make confession. It is Sunday, I have returned alone from first mass at Lentin, and here in my little room I am enjoying the sweetest calm in the world, in union with God. The charm of the morning penetrates and flows into my soul, changing me in a way I cannot describe. I leave you. I must be silent.

December 8th, 1834.—I never read any religious book, without finding in it some admirable things written, it would seem, for me. Here are some : “Those who place their hopes in the Lord will find their strength renewed from day to day. When they feel exhausted and unable to do more, they will all at once take wing like an eagle ; they will run without growing faint, they will walk and know not weariness. Onwards, there, pious soul, onwards, and when you seem at the end of your strength, take fresh ardour and courage, for the Lord will sustain you.” How often one needs that support ! Tell me, weak, trembling, faint soul, what would become of us without God's help ? These words are from Bossuet. I have opened almost no other book to-day ; the time has been spent on very different things from reading, nameless things that have little importance, but take up every moment. Good-night, my friend.

December 9th, 1834.—I have just been warming myself at every fire in the village. It is a round that we make occasionally with Mimin, and one which has its pleasures. To-day it was a visit to the sick ; so we have spoken of medicines and draughts. "Take this, do that," and they have listened to us as attentively as to any doctor. We have prescribed sabots for a child who was ill through having gone about with bare feet ; and a pillow for his brother who was lying with a severe headache on a flat bed. This gave relief, I think, though it did not cure him. Congestion of the lungs is setting in, and the poor people live in their filth like beasts in a stable ; that foul air is poisoning them. When I get back to Le Cayla I find myself in a palace, compared to that house. It is the same everywhere I look, my own position seems a happy one.

December 10th, 1834.—Hoar frost, fog, chill air, that is all that I see to-day. So I shall not go out, but am going to curl myself by the fireside with my work and my book. Sometimes the one, sometimes the other, this change amuses me. Nevertheless I should like to read all day ; but there are other things to be done, and duty comes before pleasure. Pleasure is what I call reading something which is in no way necessary to me. Here is a flea, a flea in winter ! It is a present from Trilby. Thus every season has its insects that devour us, dead and alive. The least numerous, nevertheless, are those that we see ; our teeth, our skin, all our body is said to be full of them. Poor human body, must our soul dwell within ! No wonder it is discontented

when it comes to consider its position. Oh ! that sweet moment when it comes forth, when it enjoys life, heaven, God, the other world ! Its wonder, I fancy, resembles that of the chicken issuing from its shell, if it had a soul.

I was speaking to you of reading ; it is a story about Russia that we read in the evening, and the day I spend with the *Siècle de Louis XIV.* I am told that one can read this book of Voltaire's. That is true, still there is much of Voltaire about it, every time that religion is mentioned ; but that does me no harm. So I continue, and think it well written. I have nothing more to read that I have not read before. The reports of the Carrat case have stopped. I am not sorry to lose them. These horrors transacted under our eyes are the most revolting of all. The three murderers have been condemned to death and will be executed at Gaillac. It is true that Carrat thought of the other world and read the *Imitation*. That is not surprising in a soul on the scaffold, one who allowed the idea of heaven to enter into his thoughts of murder. He never set out on his expeditions without providing himself with a string of beads. Strange idea ! "I came back," said he, "on the night of the crime to get my beads that I had forgotten, and then I ran to Coutaud's house." It was there he murdered three people in a frightful fashion, a man and two women ; but let us leave these horrors. A fine slice of maize cake awaits me on the toaster. I am going for it.

December 11th, 1834. — Still fog, the same weather as yesterday ; but my bird is singing, and that

promises sunshine. I am sure that we shall soon see it. It is only nine o'clock and before mid-day it will have broken through the clouds, and we shall have its full splendour. That delights me as much as my bird, for I don't like the dull weather.

Evening.—I have said that my bird foretold the sunshine. It came, but pale and cold ; the fire in the grate was better yet. So we did not leave it, except that father started out for the village to make an offer of marriage. A strange thing, he has been refused ; but it is out of vexation at not being able to say *yes* to another that the fair one said *no* to-day. You know her, it was she who was the same age as you, and who was waiting for you, as you know. But that is past, and her waiting was for another who has likewise escaped her. The poor girl who had set her heart upon him, is very unhappy now, and replied to the addresses of another, that she did not wish to bind herself. Her object was not to carry two chains, and if that is true, she has done well ; regret is such a burden ! A poor man from a long distance passed this way, then a little child ; that is all that has been visible to-day. Are they worth mentioning ?

December 12th, 1834.—I begin with the date, and then we shall see what will come for my day's history. Very little, doubtless, except for some unforeseen event ; which I hardly long for, unless it be a letter from you or from the mountain, which gives me pleasure.

Nothing to tell, nothing to write, nothing to think

about; the cold benumbs even the soul. In winter the thoughts seem no longer to circulate, and become congealed in the head like icicles. I often have that feeling, I have it now; but let there come some pleasure, a letter, something to read, an emotion that stimulates, a thaw sets in and the waters flow.

Two tramps have gone past. These poor people, numb with cold, made me appreciate the pleasure of being by the fireside and having something to give. You ought often to give alms now that you are rich. I know that you like to do it. I remember your once telling me that you never met a poor man without giving him a sou, if you had one. That sou has brought you luck. Give one for me. What I give here will not count, since I have nothing of my own: it is for the community; my share is small. Help me. If I were at Paris my hand would often be in my pocket.

The reign of Peter I.¹ has taken up our whole night. It is interesting; one likes to see all that can be accomplished by genius and

That is how the last week has gone. Some one came and took me away, and since then how many ideas have come, how many things to say! But all that may be left unsaid. What is the use of it? God alone can understand them, and console the heart when it is sad.

¹ This is probably Voltaire's *History of Russia under Peter the Great*. Though she abhors the scepticism of Voltaire, her remarks on the *Siècle de Louis XIV.* show that she appreciates him as a historian.

December 31st, 1834.—A fortnight has gone since I wrote anything here. Do not ask why. There are times when we do not wish to speak, things of which we wish to say nothing. Christmas has come, beautiful festival, the one which I love most, which brings as much joy to me as to the shepherds of Bethlehem. Truly the whole soul sings at the beautiful advent of God, which is proclaimed on all sides by hymns and by the pretty peals of bells. Nothing at Paris gives one an idea of what Christmas is. You have not even the midnight mass. We all went to it, father leading the way. It was an exquisite night. Never a lovelier sky than at midnight, so much so that father from time to time thrust his head out of his cloak to gaze up at it. The ground was white with hoar-frost, but we did not feel cold; the air moreover was warmed in front of us by the links that our servants carried to light our path. It was delightful I assure you, and I would gladly have seen you tramping like ourselves to the church, along those roads bordered with bushes, white as if they were in blossom. The hoar-frost makes beautiful flowers. We saw one spray so pretty that we wished to make a bouquet of it for the Holy Sacrament, but it melted in our hands: no flower lasts long. I was very sorry about my bouquet: it was sad to see it melting and shrinking drop by drop. I slept at the parsonage. The curé's kind sister made me stay, and got ready for me an excellent drink of warm milk. Father and Mimi came to warm themselves at the great blaze of the Christmas log. Afterwards came cold, mist, and everything that casts a gloom on the sky and the

soul. Now the sun is shining to-day, I revive and open out like the pimpernel, that pretty flower that expands to the sunshine.

These are my last thoughts, for I shall write nothing more about this year ; in a few hours it will be over, and we shall commence the new year. Ah, how quickly time passes ! Alas ! alas ! could it be said that I regret it ? No, oh ! no, I regret neither the time nor anything it takes from us ; it is not worth our while to cast our affections into the torrent. But the days, empty, useless, lost for Heaven, that is what awakens regret and makes us look back upon our past life. My dear friend, where shall I be next year on this day, at this hour, at this instant ? Will it be here or elsewhere, on earth or on high ? God knows, and I stand at the gate of the future, resigning myself to all that can issue thence. To-morrow I shall pray for thy happiness, for father, for Éran, for all those whom I love. It is the day for gifts, I shall receive mine from Heaven. Thence comes all my contentment, for truly on earth I find very little that pleases me. The longer I live here, the less satisfied I feel ; thus I see without grief the years come and go, years that are but so many steps towards the other world. 'Tis no sorrow or trouble that makes me think thus, do not imagine that, I would tell you if it were so ; it is the homesickness that takes possession of every soul that begins to think of Heaven. The hour is striking, it is the last I shall hear as I write to thee. I would have it last for ever, like everything that gives pleasure. How many hours have come forth from that dear old clock, that has seen so many of us pass away, yet

never stirs itself, like a sort of eternity. I love it because it has struck all the hours of my life, the sweetest when I heard them not. I remember how I lay in my cradle at the foot of it, and amused myself watching the hands creeping along. Time does not hang heavy with us at the age of four. They are reading nice things in the room ; my lamp is going out, I leave thee. Thus my year comes to an end beside a dying lamp.

January 3rd, 1835.—A letter from Brittany arrived this morning, like a beautiful gift. I have spent the whole day in thinking of Madame de La Morvonnais, and in deciphering her husband's handwriting, which is not at all easy ; now I read it and understand his thought perfectly, but cannot reply to it. The woman poet, as he fancies me, is an imaginary being, quite apart from the life I lead, a life busy with housekeeping which takes up all my time. How could it be otherwise? I know not ; and besides it is my duty, I have no wish to shirk it. Would to Heaven that my thoughts, my soul, had never taken flight beyond the narrow sphere where I am forced to live!¹ It is vain to tell me ; I cannot rise above my needle or my distaff without going too far ; I feel it, and believe it ; so I shall remain where I am, whatever she thinks ; my soul will dwell in high places, only in Heaven.

January 5th, 1835.—My dear friend, I have let

¹ These three lines are erased in the MS.

three days pass without a word to you. That will often be my lot, sometimes for one thing, sometimes another. But if words are wanting, the thoughts go on incessantly, a wheel that revolves, and very quickly to-day. I ask myself whence comes this stir; it surprises me, even saddens me sometimes, for I am so fond of rest, not inaction, but the tranquillity wherein a happy soul dwells! The saint for to-day, St. Stylites on his column, excites my admiration. He seems to me to be happy in having thus made his dwelling high up, not touching the ground even with his feet. These saints' lives are wonderful and charming to read, full of instruction for the soul that believes. I hear a young hen cackling, I must go and look for her nest.

January 6th, 1835.—A lovely day, sunshine, *Boubi!* a letter from you. Have you not forgotten the *Boubi*, those childish prayers of the Kings' day? I am not very sure what they mean, and why that day is consecrated to the wish for a good wine harvest, for that is what the children cry. We give them apples and nuts in return for the good wine they wish us, and they depart happy. It is Ratière, your old friend, who brought us your letter, not failing to ask if it was from M. Maurice, then how he was, and if he was still far away, everything with an air of interest that delighted us. I fully believe that if you had been here, she would have had some nuts in her pocket. For us it is different; it is only to friends that they are given. Your letter pleased me by the tone of contentment I notice in it. You

have weathered the storms and buffetings that have tossed you about so long. God be praised for it, and may your anchor hold fast! I had always hoped that some blessing would befall you.

January 7th, 1835. — I have just written to Félicité. It is always a book or a pen that I touch first on getting up, the books in order to pray, think, reflect. That would be my occupation the whole day if I followed my inclination, that power that leads me to thought and inward meditation. I love to loiter with my thoughts, to bend over each of them, as it were, to enjoy their fragrance before they evaporate. This taste I acquired early. I was only a child when I used to compose little soliloquies which would have a certain charm if I could recall them; but go and seek the thoughts of childhood!

Allez chercher des eaux à la source tarie!

(Go seek the waters at the dried-up spring.)

The little girl Morvonnais sends me a kiss, calls me her mother. What shall I send her in return, as pure and sweet as her child's kiss? It seems as though a lily had touched my cheek.

Que ne puis-je accourir, enfant, quand tu m'appelles,
Quand tu me dis : je t'aime et te veux caresser ;
Et que tes petits bras, comme deux blanches ailes,
S'ouvrent pour m'embrasser !

De blancs agneaux que j'ai me caressent souvent,
Une colombe aussi sur mes lèvres se joue ;
Mais lorsque je reçois le baiser d'un enfant,
Il me semble qu'un lis s'est penché sur ma joue,

Que j'ai tout le visage embaumé d'innocence,
Que tout mon être enfin devient suave et pur.
Ineffable plaisir, céleste jouissance !
Que n'ai-je tes baisers, enfant aux yeux d'azur ?

January 8th, 1835.—It is hardly worth while saying anything to-day ; nothing has come, nothing has stirred, nothing has happened in our solitude. My little bird only hops about in his cage, chirping at the sunshine ; I have often watched him, as I have nothing prettier to look at in my room. I have not gone out ; all my time has been passed in sewing a little, in reading, then in meditating. What a beautiful thing thought is, and what pleasures it gives us when it rises on high. That is its natural direction which it takes whenever it shakes itself free of worldly objects. Between heaven and ourselves there is a mysterious attraction. God longs for us and we long for God. Some bird is hovering over my head, I hear it though it is scarcely visible, it is night. This is not the time for the night birds. That is what distracts me and tangles the thread I am winding. How little is required to do that ! This small apparition made me leave the room, but not through fear. I am going to tell Mimi to come and see this bird.

January 9th, 1835.—What was that bird that I saw last night ? It vanished like a dream as soon as I brought the candle. They laughed at me, saying it was mere imagination. Nevertheless, I saw it with my own eyes ; I looked at it for more than five minutes, and it was the noise it made in flying that drew my attention to it.

March 1st, 1835.—My journal has been forsaken for a long time. I found it in opening my desk, and the fancy seized me once more to write a word in it. Shall I tell you why I have left it off? It is because I feel that the time spent in writing is lost. We must account to God for every minute, and is it not wrong to spend them in recording here the days that glide away? Yet I find a charm in it, and amid my present solitude, delight to retrace the path of my life. When I re-opened this book and read a few pages, I thought that in twenty years, if I live, it would be delightful to read it, and see myself again as if in a mirror, that preserved the traits of youth. I am no longer young, but at fifty my present age will seem youthful. So I allow myself this pleasure. I believe that it is innocent. If my scruples return, I shall leave it off immediately. But God is perhaps less exacting than my own conscience, and will pardon me this little pastime. Therefore my journal shall start again to-morrow. I must tell to-day's joy, sweet and pure joy : a kiss that I received from a poor woman to whom I was giving alms. That kiss fell upon my heart like a kiss from God.

March 3rd, 1835.—All things sang aloud this morning while I was at prayer ; the finches, the thrushes, and my little linnet. It was just like spring, and to-night there is nothing but clouds, cold and darkness, winter still, winter in all its sadness. I do not quite like it ; but every season is good, since God has made them. Welcome, then, the hoar-frost, the wind, the snow, the mist and

darkness, welcome every kind of weather. Is it not wrong to complain when one is sitting cosily beside the fire, while so many poor people outside are frozen? A beggar enjoyed himself greatly at noon with a dish of soup that was given him at the door; the lack of sunshine did not matter to him. So I can do without it also. We must have something agreeable to-day when pleasure prevails everywhere, and we wished to keep Shrove Tuesday amid sunshine, walking about in the open air. We had to confine ourselves to visiting the village, where everybody wished to entertain us. We said, "Thank you," without accepting anything, because we had already dined. The children flocked after us like chickens. I made them pick out some nuts I had put in my pocket to give them. They will remember our visits for twenty years, because we gave them something nice, and that will be a pleasant recollection. Those were nuts well spent. I did not write yesterday because I did not think that trifles were worth writing. To-day it is the same; all our days are almost alike as regards outside things. The life of the soul is different; there is nothing more varied, more changing, more restless. Do not let us speak of it; to describe the incidents of one hour would require an eternity. I am going to write to Louise. That will keep me in good humour.

March 4th, 1835.—This morning I hung at father's bedside a small cross that a little girl gave him yesterday, out of gratitude for his having procured her admission into a convent. 'Tis Christine Roquier. Her pious keepsake gratified us greatly,

and we shall preserve it as a memorial of gratitude. Father's font will be between that cross and a crucifix. I am greatly attached to that image, battered as it is, because I have always seen it there, and when I was a child I used to go and say my prayers before it. I remember asking many favours from the holy image. To that sorrowful figure of the dying Christ were related all my little troubles, and I always found consolation. Once I had some stains on my gown, at which I was in great tribulation lest I should get a scolding. I entreated my image to make the stains disappear, and they did disappear. How this gracious miracle made me love God! From that day I fancied there was nothing impossible for prayer or for my image. And I asked all sorts of things from it; once that my doll might have a soul; but this time I was disappointed. 'Twas perhaps the only time.

March 7th, 1835.—To-day a new hearthstone was placed in the kitchen. I have just stood on it, and here I record the sort of consecration of the hearth, of which the stone will preserve no trace. The hearth is quite an event here, almost like a new altar in a church. Each one goes to gaze at it, and looks forward to spending happy hours and a long life before that family hearth (for it belongs to all, masters and servants), but who knows? . . . Perhaps I shall be the first to leave it, my mother did not stay long. I am said to be like her.

March 8th, 1835.—Last night I had a great dream. The ocean lay under our windows. I saw

it, I heard its billows rolling like thunder, for it was during a tempest that I beheld the sea, and I was afraid. An elm tree that rose up with a bird on the top, drove away my terror. I listened to the bird : no more ocean, no more dream.

March 9th, 1835.—The day broke calm and fine, no wind or rain. My bird was singing all morning, and I too, for I was contented and had a presentiment that some good fortune would befall me to-day. Here it is, my friend ; it is one of your letters. Oh ! if one would only come like this every day ! Now I must write to Louise.

Even whilst I was writing, the clouds, the wind, have come back. Nothing more changeable than the sky and our soul. Good-night.

March 10th, 1835.—Oh ! the lovely moonbeam that has just fallen on the testament that I was reading !

March 11th, 1835.—This day fifty-seven years ago, at 5 o'clock in the morning, our father came into the world. As soon as we were up, he, Mimi and I went to the church to celebrate that anniversary and to hear mass. Prayer to God is the only way of celebrating anything in this world. So on this birthday of the tenderest, the most loving, the best of fathers, I have had many prayers to offer. May God preserve him, and add to his years so many that I may not see the end. No, O God ! no, I should not like to be the last to die. To go to heaven before you all would be my greatest happi-

ness. But why speak of death on a birthday? It is because life and death are sisters, and come into being together like twins.

I shall not be here to-morrow. I shall have left thee, my dear little room. Father is taking me away to Caylus; the journey does not please me very much. I do not like going away, nor change of place, of sky, of life, and all this is changed in travelling. Adieu, my confidant, thou shall await me in my desk. Who knows when we shall meet again? I say in a week, but who can reckon with certainty in this world? It is not without a certain pleasure that I shall revisit that spot, also my cousin and her daughter and the honest cavalier who loved me so much! They pretend that he loves me still. I am going to discover that. Possibly he may be the same, but he will find me greatly changed within these last ten years. Ten years! it is a century for a woman. Then we shall be the same age, for the worthy man has passed his fourscore.

March 12th, 1835.—It was a real grief for me to go away: father knew it, so he left me. Last night he said to me, "Do as you like." I wanted to stay and felt quite dejected at the thought that to-night I should be far away from here, far from Mimi, far from my fireside, far from my little room, far from my books, from Trilby and my bird. Everything, down to the smallest trifle, comes into the mind at the moment of our departure and encircles us so completely that we cannot tear ourselves away. That is what happens to me every time that there is any question of travelling. For me travelling consists

of a week's outing. Like the dove I love to return to my nest every evening. No other place has any attraction for me.

Je n'aime que les fleurs que nos ruisseaux arrosent,
Que les prés dont mes pas ont foulé le gazon ;
Je n'aime que les bois où nos oiseaux se posent,
Mon ciel de tous les jours et son même horizon.

Nine o'clock.—That is the hour that the pious soul hears with deepest attention, because of the pious memories that it evokes. At the ninth hour, the gospel tells us, darkness covered the earth while Jesus was on the cross. It was also at the ninth hour that the Holy Ghost descended upon the apostles. So this hour is blessed and consecrated by the Church in prayer. It is then the canons begin their service.

March 14th, 1835.—This is one of my fine days, those days which begin and end sweet as a cup of milk. Thank God for this day passed without sorrow! They are so few in this life! and my heart more than any other is grieved at the smallest thing. A word, a recollection, the sound of a voice, a sad face, any trifle, often disturbs the serenity of my soul, the little Heaven darkened by the least cloud. This morning I received a letter from Gabrielle, the cousin I love for her sweetness and her beautiful soul. I was anxious about her delicate state of health, and I had heard nothing about her for more than a month. Her letter delighted me so much that I read it before prayers, I was so eager to

read. To see a letter and not open it, that is impossible ! I read it. Among other things I saw that Gabrielle does not approve of my retiring tastes and my renunciation of the world. It is because she does not know me, because she is young and does not understand that there is an age when the heart detaches itself from all that does not give it life. The world charms and intoxicates it, but that is not life. It is to be found only in God and in *oneself*. To be alone with God, oh ! supreme joy !

Another letter for me has been delivered at Cahusac, from Lili this time, another sweet friend, one, however, that dwells apart from the world ; a pure soul, spotless as snow, so white that I am dazzled when I look at it; a soul made for the eyes of God. She bids me come and see her, but I am unwilling to go before Easter. After that I shall go to Rayssac, and on my return I shall stay as long as I can with Lili. I was leaving Cahusac, quite pleased with my letter, when I saw a little boy beside the well, crying in a heart-breaking fashion. It was because he had broken his jug, and the poor child was afraid that he would get a beating from his father. It was not he who told me that, he was crying so bitterly, but some women who had seen the jug fall. Poor little fellow, I saw that I could console him with ten sous, and taking him by the hand I led him to a labourer's house where I got another jug for him. Charles X. would not be happier if he regained his crown. Is not this a fine day ?

March 15th, 1835.—Mud, rain, wintry sky, un-

pleasant weather for Sunday ; but it is all the same to me, just as if I saw the sun. Not that I am indifferent, I prefer fine weather ; but all weathers are good ; when there is peace within what do other things matter ? I was at Lentin, where I heard a very bad sermon, as it seems to me. The word of God, beautiful as it is, how it is robbed of its beauty in issuing from certain lips ! One would need to know that it comes from heaven. I am going to Vespers, despite the weather. I brought back a flower from Andillac, the first I have seen this year. There were some of the same kind on the altar of the Virgin, perfuming her feet. It is customary among our peasants to offer her the first flowers of their garden ; a pious and charming custom. There is no more beautiful decoration for a country altar. I leave my flower here in remembrance of the Sunday that brings us nearest the spring.

March 16th, 1835.—Still another letter from G . . , a letter to inform me of her approaching marriage. How little I expected it ! She is so young, so delicate, so fragile. One sees but little life in that small childish frame. Heavens, how I hope she may be happy ! but I do not know I see nothing bright in her marriage. However, I must send her my congratulations, it is the custom. I have spent the whole day in thinking of her, in picturing her future and pondering on these words in her letter : *I have peace only when on my knees.*

March 17th. 1835.—G has such freshness of heart. That is how she may be happy if her

husband is kind, because she will love him with all the charm of a first affection.

I am listening to the shepherd whistling in the valley. That is the gayest expression that can pass over the lips of man. That whistling denotes a careless happiness, a contentment that is delightful. These poor people indeed require something, and they have gaiety. Among the sheep two little children are gathering sticks, singing as they go. They break off now and then to laugh or play, for nothing of all that appeals to them. I should like to watch their doings and listen to the blackbird that is singing in the hedge beside the brook ; but I wish to read. It is Massillon that I have been reading all Lent. I admire his sermon for Friday *On Prayer*, one which is truly a hymn.

March 18th, 1835.—This morning a shepherd told me that the wagtails had arrived. One followed the sheep all day ; that is a good omen, we shall soon have flowers. It is believed also that these birds bring good luck to the flocks. The shepherds reverence them as a kind of genii, and take care not to kill any. If that disaster were to happen, the finest sheep of the flock would perish. I wish that this simple credulity would likewise preserve as many other little birds which our peasants cruelly slaughter ; and which formerly caused me much grief. The calamity that befell the nests was one of the sorrows of my childhood. I thought of the mothers, the little ones, and I was heartbroken that I could not protect these innocent creatures. I commended them to God.

Je disais : O mon Dieu, ne les faites pas naître
Ou préservez-les de malheur ;
Préservez ces petits, vous êtes bien le maître,
Des griffes du vatour, de mains de l'oiseleur.

J'en ai vu qu'on prenait de leur nid sous le lierre,
D'autres sur le grand chêne ou cachés sous la terre,
Et, tristes comme moi quand je n'ai pas ma cour,
Tous mouraient dans un jour.

Et tous auraient chanté, et tous, mettant des ailes,
Se seraient envolés dans les bois, sur les mers ;
Et quand naîtront les fleurs, ces pauvres hirondelles
Renaitraient dans les airs.

Vous les verriez, enfants, passer sous les nauages,
Et puis chaque matin gazouiller tout l'été.
Oh ! que c'est bien plus doux que de les voir en cages
Sans chants ni liberté !

March 19th, 1835.—I know not whither these birds would have brought me, so many memories do they recall, and so kindly do I feel towards them. Here I am, waiting joyfully ; Father is coming back to-night. I am longing for him ; a week's absence is long when we are not accustomed to be separated. Besides it is Saint Joseph's day, father's patron saint. It cannot but be a fine day. I went to mass to celebrate it, here is my bouquet ; prayers are divine flowers.

March 20th, 1836.—Father has come back, fresh, well, and charmed with the welcome he received from my cousin at La Gardelle. The evening was spent in speaking about that worthy family who love

us, of their neighbours, of their curé. The life of the country curés is interesting, and I like to inquire about it. In short, what with one thing and another, we had plenty to talk about until ten o'clock (which is our usual bed time), without having heard all.

I have no wish to write to-day, I prefer to sew. The needle suits me more than the pen ; I take it up once more. On rising this morning we had a letter from Marie, and a number of *The Spreading of Faith*, there is food both for the heart and the soul. Marie sends us her kind regards. The missionaries send us news of conversions. How these men are to be admired, and with what gladness I give them my sou every week ! I would like to see you belonging to this association.

March 21st, 1835.—I believe to-day is the first day of spring. I would hardly have thought it ; by the cold, and the breeze that howls, one would fancy it was January. Yet a little while, and the cold will depart : patience, poor impatient creature that I am, eager to see flowers, a bright sky, to breathe the air perfumed with spring ! When that time has come I shall be a few days older, perhaps have a few sorrows, that is how enjoyments come. All the same, I had a pleasant awakening. As I opened my eyes, the lovely moon was passing before my window and shining on my bed, shining so brightly that all at once I fancied it was a lamp hung from my shutter. The white light was pretty and soft to see. So I looked at it, admired it, and watched it until it was hidden behind the shutter, to reappear

presently and hide itself like a child playing at hide-and-seek.

I have been to confession ; I have pondered long over the sweet and beautiful moral teaching of M. Bories, then I wrote to Louise, now I am here. How many delightful things I have done ! If I were to write all now it would be too much ; I could not sleep ; and sleep I must, and be able to think of God and pray to-morrow, which is Sunday. One must spare this frail body which holds the soul. It is annoying, but what can one do ? The angels have not that trouble : happy angels !

March 24th, 1835 :—I behold a beautiful sunbeam which from without comes resplendent into my room. This brightness makes it prettier and detains me here, though I am anxious to go downstairs. I am so fond of what comes from Heaven ! Besides I admire my wall all decked with sunbeams, and a chair on which they fall like draperies. Never have I possessed a room more beautiful. It is a pleasure to be in it and to enjoy it as something of my own. Oh ! the fine weather ! I long to enjoy it, to drink deep draughts of the air, which is so balmy outside to-day. That must wait until afternoon : this morning I must write. Yesterday there came three people and some books, all friendly visits. The afternoon slipped away while we chatted, and listened to a thousand matters that Madame Roquier can relate as quite interesting news ; or amused her little daughter, a child of four, fresh as an early rose. It was a pleasure to kiss her plump cheeks, and watch her munching cakes.

Mimi and I are invited to be present to-morrow at M. Roquier's for the consecration of a bell. That excursion is far from disagreeable.

March 26th, 1835.—A bell is a beautiful thing when surrounded with candles, and dressed in white like a child ready for baptism. It is anointed, there is singing, the bell is questioned and replies with a little tinkle that it is a Christian and wishes to ring for God's sake. Again, for whom? For it answers twice. For all the sacred things of the earth, for birth, for death, for prayer, for sacrifice, for the righteous, for sinners. In the morning, I proclaim the dawn, at evening the close of the day. Celestial clock, I shall ring the angelus and the holy hours when God wishes to be praised. At my peals the pious souls will utter the name of Jesus, Mary, or some beloved saint; their gaze will rise to the sky, or, in a church, their heart will overflow with love.

These and other things filled my thoughts, as I stood before that little bell of Itzac, which I saw blessed, amidst a crowd who looked on without thinking of anything, it seemed to me, and watched us as much as the bell. Two young ladies were indeed curiosities and quite novelties for the people of Itzac. Poor people!

March 27th, 1835.—At two o'clock father set out for Alby where Lili requires him for her affairs. Here we are alone for I know not how many days; for possibly father may go to Rayssac. On his return I shall hear about Louise. I am all impatience. It is such a long time since I heard from that dear

friend. It is not that she forgets me ; I cannot believe that. If I believed it No, no, Louise loves me and will always be my friend. It is said and done, we are no longer at the early stage when we can doubt of our friendship. Either she is unable to write, or the colliers lose the letters. The tiresome creatures, if they only knew what they lose.

March 28th, 1835.—I have narrowly escaped a sad loss : the cat had my little linnet under his claws when I went into my room. I rescued it, giving the cat a sound smack, and he let go. The bird had only got a fright, then he felt so glad that he started to sing with all his might, as if to thank me and assure me that the fright had not damaged his voice. A bullock-driver who passes along the road to Cordes sings like that as he drives his waggon, but an air so careless, so indolent, that I prefer the chirping of my linnet. When I am alone here, I delight in listening to everything that stirs out of doors. I prick my ears at every sound ; the cackling of a hen, the fall of a branch, the buzzing of a fly, everything interests me and feeds my thoughts. How many times I find myself observing, following with my eyes tiny insects that I notice in the leaves of a book, on the bricks, or on the table. I do not know their names, but we are acquaintances, like passers-by who notice each other on the road. We lose sight of each other, then we meet again by chance, and the meeting pleases me. But the little creatures run away, for they are afraid of me, though I have never hurt them. Apparently they

think me very formidable. Would it be the same in Paradise. It is not said that Eve ever frightened anything. It is only since the Fall that fear has arisen among animals. I must write to Philibert.

March 29th, 1835. — Last evening I began my letter for abroad, which I wrote with the greatest interest, because of the memories it evoked, and the dangers it will run. Is it possible that a leaf of paper cast on the ocean arrives at its address, falls right under my cousin's eyes in his island? It is incredible, unless some angelic navigator takes this paper under his wing. That Ile de France is truly at the end of the world. Poor Philibert, how far off he is, and how much to be pitied, he who is so fond of his country, his parents, and his fair European sky. I recall the last evening we spent together, and how he gazed with rapture on those stars of his native land that would soon vanish for him! He regretted most of all the pole star that one no longer sees south of the equator. Then appears the Southern Cross. The Southern Cross is very beautiful, "But never," he told me, "have I looked at it or any of our African constellations so much as that little North Star."

Etoiles du beau ciel de France,
Du beau pays de ma naissance,
Vous ne luirez, plus à mes yeux
Par delà l'Océan immense,
Où je vais vivre malheureux,
Et, sans vous voir, voir d'autres cieux,
Etoiles du beau ciel de France !

I fancied I could hear my cousin's voice as he uttered these words, and my heart melted. How much exiles are to be pitied ! In that separation from their country there is no pleasure for them. With his wife and children, Philibert is sad in Africa ; in France he would be happy.

March 30th, 1835.—Two letters have come for us : one of joyful tidings, to announce the marriage of Sophie Deeazes, the other full of mourning, to tell us of death. It was poor M. de La Morvonnais who wrote to me in tears, all about his dear Marie. How he loved her, and loves her yet ! They were two souls who never could part : so they will remain united despite death, except for the now lifeless body. Such is Christian union, spiritual, immortal, the divine bond that creates love, the charity that never dies. In his bereavement, Hippolyte is not alone : everywhere he sees Marie, always Marie. "Speak of her to me, always of her," he told me. Then, "Write to me often, you have some ways of expressing yourself that brings her back to me vividly." I am sure of it ; it is God's work, He has put in my soul certain points of likeness to her soul. That is why she loved me, and I her. Sympathy springs from the relations of the soul. I found, moreover, in Marie something infinitely tender, which I loved so much, and which issues only from a pure soul. "The true sign of innocence is gentleness," says Bossuet. How many charms, how much happiness I would have enjoyed in that heavenly friendship ! God has willed otherwise, and has taken her from me after a year that has

been a joy to me. Why so soon? No complaints; it is God's will that we should not complain of what He takes from us, and for a few days of separation. Those who die do not depart so far away, for the sky is near us. We have but to raise our eyes, and we behold their home. Let us console ourselves with this sweet sight, with resignation on earth, which is only a step at the gate of Paradise.

April 1st, 1835.—Here is a month gone, half gloomy, half bright, like almost our whole life. The month of March has a few gleams of spring which are very sweet; it is the first to see flowers, a few pimpernels which open slightly to the sunshine, some violets in the woods under the dead leaves, which guard them from the white frost. Little children delight in them and call them March flowers. The name is a very fit one. They are dried to make a decoction. That flower is sweet and good for colds, and, like hidden virtue, its perfume reveals it. Some swallows made their appearance to-day, glad promise of Spring.

April 2nd, 1835.—All this day my spirit has left the sky to hover over a tomb; for sixteen years ago at midnight my mother died. This sad anniversary is consecrated to mourning and prayer. I have passed it in the presence of God, in regret and in hope: as I weep I raise my eyes, and see the sky where my mother is happy, no doubt, for she suffered much. Her illness was long and her spirit patient. I do not remember her ever complaining, or crying

the least under the pain that racked her : no Christian ever suffered more bravely. One could see that she had learned it before the cross. She would have smiled on her death-bed, like a martyr on the rack. Her face never lost its serenity, and even in her last moments her thoughts seemed to belong to a day of rejoicing. I wondered at that, I who saw her suffer so much, I who wept at the smallest hurt, who knew not resignation in suffering. So when she told me that her end was near, I looked at her, and her air of contentment made me think that she would not die. Yet she died on April 2nd, at midnight, when I had fallen asleep at the foot of her bed. Her quiet death did not awake me, never did a soul depart more calmly from this world. It was my father Heavens ! I hear the priest, I see the lighted candles, a pale weeping face ; I was led away into another room.

April 3rd, 1835.—At nine in the morning my mother was laid in her grave.

April 4th, 1835.—I am going to Cahusac with the sun shining on my head. If that troubles me, I shall think of the saint for to-day, St. Macaire journeying in the desert with a basket of sand on his head to escape a temptation. He tortured the body to save the soul.

April 8th, 1835.—I know not why I have written nothing for three days ; I come back to it now that I am alone in my room. Solitude makes us write,

because it makes us think. We enter into conversation with our souls. I ask mine what it has seen to-day, what it has learned, what it has loved ; for each day it loves something. This morning I saw a beautiful sky, the chestnut in leaf, and heard the little birds singing. I listened to them under the great oak, beside the horse-trough which was being washed out. These sweet songs and the washing of the basin brought mingled thoughts into my mind : the birds gladdened me, and, watching the muddy stream of water that was so pure before, I was sorry they had stirred it up, and I pictured to myself our soul when anything unsettles it ; even the most beautiful object loses its charm when its depths are stirred, for in the depths of every human soul there is some little impurity. Is it worth wasting ink to write these commonplaces ? It is better to talk about poor Tamisier, who, seated beside the door-way, related to me some adventure that befell him on one of his expeditions. I thanked him for it with a cup of wine, which set his tongue a-wagging once more, and lent him legs to carry him to a lodging for the night. I read a sermon ; not being able to go to hear one, I turn my little room into a church, where I find God, it seems, and without anything to distract me. When I have prayed, I reflect ; when I have meditated, I read, and all that is performed before a little cross on the table, just like an altar. Underneath is the drawer where I keep my letters and my relics.

April 9th, 1835.—I have meditated this morning on the tears of Magdalen. The sweet tears and the

beautiful story of that woman who loved so much
Here is Father, I leave everything.

April 13th, 1835.—Since Father's return I have left my journal, my books and many other things. There are days of faintness when the soul withdraws from all its affections, and retires into itself, as if weary. This weariness without work, what is it but weakness? We must overcome it, like so many other faults that dispute with us the possession of the soul. If we did not slay them one by one, all these difficulties would end by devouring us, as the worm eats away the cloth. I pass too suddenly from sadness to joy; when I say *joy*, I mean these pleasures of the soul, calm and sweet, which only shine forth during a period of serenity. A letter, something that reminds me of God or of those I love, has that effect on me, and at other times the contrary. It is when I take things amiss that they grieve me. God knows the fears and raptures He produces in me; you, my friends, know not how sweet you are to me, how bitter! Do you remember, Maurice, that little short letter that tormented me for a fortnight? You seemed cold, indifferent, unkind.

I have just hung from my font the holy palm-branch. Yesterday was Palm Sunday, the festival of children, so happy with their little branches decked with cakes, in the church. That glad admission is granted them, no doubt, in memory of the Hosanna that the children sang to Jesus in the temple. God leaves nought without recompense. Here is my note-book finished. Shall I begin another? I know not. Adieu to this one and to thee.

II.

April 14th, 1835.—Why should I not continue to write to you, my dear Maurice? This book will give you as much pleasure as the other two, so I continue. Will you not be glad to know that I have just had a delightful quarter of an hour on the steps of the terrace, sitting beside a poor old woman who crooned a piteous lament about an incident that happened formerly at Cahusac? It was about a gold cross that had been stolen from the neck of the Holy Virgin. The old woman remembered hearing from her grandmother about a still more sacrilegious theft which had taken place in the same church, since it was the Holy Sacrament which was carried off one day it was left alone in the Church. The thief was a young girl who, while everyone was at the harvest, came to the altar, and climbing on to the top, put the monstrance in her apron, and went off to hide it under a rose-bush in a wood. The shepherds who discovered it went to give information, and nine priests came in procession to do reverence to the Holy Sacrament of the rose-bush, and to take it back to the church. Nevertheless, the poor girl was taken, tried, and condemned to the stake. At the moment of her death she begged to confess herself, and admitted to the priest about the theft; it was not because she was a thief, she said, but in order to hold the Holy Sacrament

in the forest. "I had thought that under a rose-bush God would be as pleased as on an altar." At these words an angel descended from the sky to announce her pardon and to console the pious criminal, who was burnt on a pile, of which the rose-bush formed the first faggot. That is what the beggar-woman sang to me like a nightingale while I listened. I thanked her, then I offered her something to pay for her lament; she would take nothing but flowers: "Give me a spray of that lilac." I gave her four big sprays, and the poor old woman went away, her stick in one hand, her bouquet in the other, and I went inside with her lament.

April 15th, 1835.—On awakening I heard the nightingale, but only a sigh, a faint sign of a voice. I listened a long time without hearing anything else. The charming musician had just arrived, and was but making his presence known. It was like the first note of a great orchestra. Everything sings or is about to sing.

I have not read the life of the saint for to-day; I am going to read it. Such is my custom before dinner. I find that whilst one is eating, whilst one is at the "manger," it is good to have in the soul something spiritual like the life of a saint. The life of St. Macedon is charming; he who successfully prayed for the birth of Theodoric, and who said to a hunter astonished at meeting the saint on the mountain, "You run after beasts, I after God." In these words is the entire life of the saints and that of men of the world. We have an extra guest in the kitchen,

a cricket which was brought in among some herbs to-night. There he is established on the hearth, where the little creature will sing when he is happy.

Maunday Thursday.—I have come back richly perfumed from the chapel of moss where lies the holy pyx in the church. This is a beautiful day when God chooses to rest among the flowers and perfumes of spring. We have taken the greatest pains, Mimi, I, and Rose, the church-warden's wife, in making this altar, aided, as we were, by M. le Curé. I thought as I was making it of the guest chamber, of that well-decked room where Jesus chose to hold Passover with his disciples, offering himself as the lamb. Oh! What a gift! What is to be said of the Eucharist? I know not: we adore, possess, see, and love; the soul, speechless, loses itself in an abyss of blessedness. Amidst these ecstasies I thought of you, and longed to have you by my side at the holy table, as you were three years ago.

Easter Tuesday.—Here are several days gone without my writing to you or to anyone. The services have taken up my time, and I have lived, as it were, at the church. Pleasant and beautiful life, that I regret to see ended; but I find it again here when I desire it. I open the door of my little room. I enter into calm contemplation and solitude. I know not why I ever come forth.

There, on my window ledge, is a bird that has come to visit mine. He is afraid, takes to flight, and the poor caged one is grieved and flutters as if

trying to escape. I should do the same if I were in his place, and yet I keep him. Were I to let him out he would fly, sing, and make his nest ; he would be happy, but I should no longer have him, and I love him and wish to have him, so I keep him. Poor little linnet, thou shalt always be a prisoner. I enjoy thee at the expense of thy liberty, I pity thee and keep thee. That is how pleasure triumphs over justice. But what wouldst thou do if I restored thee to thy fields? Knowest thou that thy wings, which have never been unfolded, would not bear thee far in the great space that thou seest through the bars of thy cage? As for thy food, thou couldst not find it, thou hast never tasted what thy brethren eat, and perhaps even they would banish thee like a stranger from their family feasts. Remain with me, who fed thee. The night, the dew, would soak thy pinions, and the morning cold would check thy song.

In ploughing the field they have raised up a stone which covered a great hole. I am going to see it. Jeannot, provided with a rope, went down into the vault. It is merely an excavation incrustated with pretty little stones sticking up like burnt almonds. I took some as a memorial of our discovery. Some other day I shall go down into the cave, and perhaps I shall see something more than Jeannot saw.

April 24th, 1835.—I waited for the postman all yesterday, hoping to get a letter from you. It is sure to come to-morrow. That is how I have consoled myself at each post this past fortnight that I have been waiting. It is very long, and I am grow-

ing uneasy at your silence. Can you be ill? That idea occurs to me a hundred times every day, and at night, when I wake up, I say to it, "Begone, I do not believe you." But it is just possible. M. de Fénelon's son has just died at Paris. Oh! how sad it is to die far from our dear ones, far from home! I shall write to you to-morrow.

Let us talk of something else at present. From M. Hippolyte's letter Father hopes that we shall see him here. It would be a great happiness for us to have him to ourselves, and to repay a little of what we owe him for his kindness to you. Who knows how our Le Cayla, our sky, and we ourselves would impress him? Besides I should not like him to come without you. What would Le Cayla be to him without Maurice? A desert where he would soon grow weary of being alone. If he brought his daughter with him, as he said to me, then it would be very different for him; his daughter would charm everything in his eyes, and he would fancy that Le Cayla was Le Val. I should also be delighted to see that child, to hold her on my knee, caress her, embrace her, and have her in my possession for a few days. I cannot tell you how much that little creature interests me, and gains my love, doubtless because she reminds me of her mother; and then the poor child is so interesting on account of her misfortune! Not to have a mother, alas! Although so young, she feels her loss already and will feel it more every day. The heart learns to grieve as it learns to love. As she grows older Marie will love her mother better, and will mourn her more and more. Her future engrosses my

thoughts ; I am anxious to know if she will live, if God will not take her to Him before she knows any evil. That would be a calamity for her father, but for her, oh ! no ! Can we regret that a soul should return to heaven in all its innocence ? How beautiful is the death of an infant, and how blessed these little coffins that the Church attends in all gladness ! I love them, I gaze upon them thoughtfully, and draw near as to a cradle ; I pity only the mothers, I pray to God to console them, and God does console them if they are Christians.

I have written only in this book to-day. I do not know why writing has become a necessity to me, even though it is only two words. To write is for me a sign of life, as it is for a stream to flow. I would not say it to others, that would seem madness. Who understands this overflowing of my soul, this need to reveal itself before God, before someone ? I say someone, because it seems as though you were there, as though this paper were you. God appears to listen ; He even answers in words that the soul hears but cannot utter. When I am alone, seated here or on my knees before my crucifix, I fancy myself Mary listening peacefully to the words of Jesus. During this deep silence, when God alone speaks to it, my soul is full of bliss, and dead, as it were, to all that goes on above, below, within, without ; but that does not last long. "Come, my poor soul," I say to it, "return to the things of this world." And I take my distaff, or a book, or a saucepan, or I caress *Wolf* or *Trilby*. That is the life of Heaven upon earth. I was milking a sheep a little while ago. Oh ! the fine milk, how I should

have liked to let you taste it, this good milk of Le Cayla sheep ! My friend, how many pleasures you lose by not being here !

Eight o'clock. — I must note in passing an excellent supper we have just had, father, Mimi, and I, by the fireside in the kitchen, with the servants' soup, some boiled potatoes and a cake that I baked yesterday in the oven. We had no one to wait on us but the dogs, Lion, Wolf, and Trilby, who also licked up the crumbs. All our folks are at the confirmation class that is held every evening. This repast at the fireside, among the dogs and cats, the covers laid on the boards, is a delightful thing. Nothing was wanting to complete the charm but the chirp of the cricket, and thee. Do I chatter much to-day ? Now I am going to listen to Vialarette, who has come back from Cordes ; still another pleasure.

April 25th, 1835. — Here I am in front of a charming bouquet of lilac that I have just plucked on the terrace. My little room is scented with it ; it is as though I were in a flower-vase, such perfumes do I breathe.

April 26th, 1835. — I know not what cut short my meditations about flowers yesterday morning ; I have since seen some others on the Cahusac road, which is all bordered with hawthorn. It is delightful to ramble amid these perfumes, to hear the little birds singing on all sides in the hedges. Nothing is so charming as these morning excursions in spring, and I am not sorry to get up early to enjoy that

pleasure. Soon I shall get up at five o'clock. I regulate myself by the sun, and we get up together. In winter he is lazy ; so am I, and I do not get up before seven. Yet sometimes the day seems long to me. That happens when the sky is cloudy, when I am sad and waiting for a little sunshine or something radiant in my soul. Then the days are long. Ah ! how strange that we should find a day long when our whole life is so brief ! It is because *ennui* settles down on me and remains there, and everything that lasts any time drags it out to an eternity. Oh ! how I pity a soul in purgatory, where waiting is torment, and what waiting ! Could we compare it with the waiting we know on earth, whether for fortune, or for glory, or for all that makes the human heart beat fast ? Perhaps one alone is the shadow of it, the waiting of love when it awaits the object of its affection. Thus Fénelon compares the felicity of heaven to that of a mother who beholds once more the son whom she thought dead.

The clock is striking noon. No more time to write.

When I see a man who on passing before the crucifix crosses himself or takes off his hat, I say to myself, "There is a Christian passing ;" and I reverence him, and do not bolt the door if I am alone in the house. On the contrary I stand at the window and watch as long as I can that good Christian face, as I have just done this moment. We have no reason to fear those who fear God. I would gladly have opened the door to the stranger I saw on horseback beside the cross. May God be with him on his way. I am going out also, but not

very far, just to the church for vespers. It is Sunday, a day for the body to be out of doors, and for the soul to meditate. It retires into itself and leaves us. Post day again, and no letter. What are you thinking of, my friend ?

April 27th, 1835.—I met Cruchon's little boy. The poor child has lost his father, his mother is dead too, and since then the orphan has a pathetic habit. He puts a handkerchief in bed by his side in the place where his mother lay, and he falls asleep sucking it. Sweet illusion, which consoles him and makes him so attached to his piece of handkerchief, that he weeps and cries if he awakes without finding it at his lips. Then he calls his mother, tells her to come back, and is soothed only by his doll : what a simple want this doll is, so befitting the soul of a child, and even of any man ! For everyone in affliction has his own doll, and rejoices at the faintest image of his vanished happiness.

April 28th, 1835.—When everyone is engaged, and I am not wanted, I retreat here at all hours to write, read, or pray. Here I write all that goes on in my soul as well as what goes on in the house, so that we shall be able to recall all the past again, day by day. For me it matters not what takes place, and I would not write it, but I say to myself, "Maurice will be very glad to see what we were doing while he was away, and to get back thus into the family life ;" so I put it all down for you.

But I notice that I hardly speak of anyone at all, and my egotism always appears on the scene. I

say, "I have done this, I have seen that, I have thought so and so," leaving the public out of account, as is the usual way with conceit ; but mine is conceit of the heart which can speak only of itself. The worthless painter can give only his portrait to his friend, the great painter offers pictures. I go on with the portrait then. But for the rain that fell this morning, I would be at Gaillac. Thanks to the rain, I prefer to be here. What salon could compare with my room? With whom would I be just now, who could compare with those around me? Bossuet, St. Augustine, and other holy books which speak to me when I want it, enlighten me, console me, strengthen me, answer all my wants. To leave them grieves me, to carry them away is difficult ; it is best not to leave them.

I am reading in my spare time a book by Leibnitz, who charms me with his catholicity and the good pious things I find in him, such as the following about confession : "I regard a pious, grave, and prudent confessor as a great instrument of God for the salvation of souls ; for his counsel serves to guide our affections, to enlighten us on our faults, to keep us from temptation, to remove our doubts, to raise up the downcast heart, in short, to cure or relieve all the ills of the souls ; and if there is scarcely to be found on earth anything more excellent than a faithful soul, what happiness it is to find one that is bound by the inviolable religion of a divine sacrament to keep faith and to succour souls !"

Such a spiritual friend I have in M. Bories. So the news of his departure grieves me deeply. I am sad, with a sadness that brings tears from my soul.

I would not say that elsewhere, it might be taken amiss, perhaps misunderstood. In the outer world people know not what a confessor is, the friend of one's soul, its closest confidant, its physician, its master, its light ; that man who binds us, releases us, gives us peace, throws heaven open to us, whom we speak to on our knees, calling him, like God, our Father ; faith makes him in all truth God and Father. When I am at his feet, I see in him only Jesus listening to Magdalen and pardoning much because she had loved much. Confession is but the overflowing of repentance into love.

Gaillac, May 5th, 1835.—The conversation here last night was all about a young girl who died as she was leaving a ball where she had spent the night. Poor girl's soul, where art thou ? I have too many occupations to listen to my thoughts. Let them go away.

May 9th, 1835.—I too have just come home from a dance, the first I have ever seen or been at. But my heart was not in the mood, and I was more disposed to rest. So I danced badly, for lack of practice and of inclination. I heard some laughter at my expense, and that did not amuse me, but I amused the girls who laughed, which comes to the same thing as adding to the pleasure of others. I did it with the best will in the world, but this complaisance would soon tire me, like everything that goes on in the world where I feel a stranger. I sit on a sofa and think about the lawn, or the chestnut tree, or the warren, where I am much more at my ease.

" Oh ! laissez-moi mes rêveries,
Mes beaux vallons, mon ciel si pur,
Mes ruisseaux coulant aux prairies,
Mes bois, mes collines fleuries
Et mon fleuve aux ondes d'azur.

" Laissez ma vie, au bord de l'onde,
Comme elle, suivre son chemin,
Inconnue aux clameurs du monde,
Toujours pure, mais peu profonde
Et sans peine du lendemain.

" Laissez-la couler, lente et douce,
Entre les fleurs, près des coteaux,
Jouant avec un brin de mousse,
Avec une herbe qu'elle pousse,
Avec le saule aux longs rameaux.

" Mes heures, à tout vent bercées,
S'en vont se tenant par la main ;
Sur leurs pas légers, mes pensées
Éclosent, belles et pressées,
Comme l'herbe au bord du chemin.

" On dit que la vie est amère,
O mon Dieu ! ce n'est pas pour moi :
La poésie et la prière,
Comme une soeur, comme une mère
La bercent pure devant toi.

" Enfant, elle poursuit un rêve,
Une espérance, un souvenir,
Comme un papillon sur la grève,
Et chaque beau jour qui se lève
Lui semble tout son avenir.

" Les jours lui tombent goutte à goutte,
Mais doux comme un rayon de miel ;
Il n'en est point qu'elle redoute.
O mon Dieu ! c'est ainsi, sans doute,
Que vivent les anges au ciel.

" La mort doit nous être donnée
Douce après ces jours de bonheur.
Comme une fleur demi-fanée
Au soir de sa longue journée,
On penche la tête et l'on meurt.

" Et si l'on croit, si l'on espère,
Qu'est-ce mourir ? Fermer les yeux,
Se recueillir pour la prière,
Livrer l'âme à l'ange son frère,
Dormir pour s'éveiller aux cieux."

JUSTIN MAURICE.

It is the sweetest poem, and more to my taste than anything that I have found since I have come here. If it is fine I shall start to-night. The idea enchants me, I shall see father and Mimi: what a delightful thing it is to return home !

(No date).—Here I am at dear Le Cayla, and indeed for several days, though I have not told you. It was because I had put my notebook under a rug on taking it out of my portmanteau, and there it has remained ever since. In rummaging I put my hand on it; it opened, and I continue my writing. It was a delightful moment when I saw my family again, Father, Mimi, Erembert, who all kissed

me so tenderly and made me feel so deeply the bliss of being loved.

Yesterday was a splendid day: there came four letters and two friends, M. Bories and the Abbé F, Cécile's brother. I know not which of the two delighted us the more and was the more kind, the one by his intelligence, the other by his heart. We talked a great deal, laughed, drank one another's health, and to finish up with, we started to play at 'pass-the-donkey,' just like children, cheating one another the while. Nothing at all serious, it was a day of relaxation when the soul takes its ease and follows its bent. It was the gaiety of a priest and of Christian friends.

As we were at dessert two letters arrived, one from Lili, the other from poor Philibert, still more unhappy. His letter is heart-rending: I read it at table and I saw tears in the eyes of our good curé's. M. Bories recalled how the morning of his departure, Philibert ran to his bedside to bid him adieu, and said, 'I am going, Monsieur le Curé; I am leaving my country perhaps for ever; I beg you to say a mass for me to-day.' He said it, I remember, and we were present, my aunt and ourselves, weeping as much as we were praying. My dear cousin makes some kind and charming remarks about myself, things which go straight to the heart and yet cannot be spoken. I suppressed them in reading the letter. He speaks of the poem which I wrote to my poor friend at Le Val, and which Father had sent him. So this memento has crossed the seas, and it is known at the other end of the earth that I loved thee, my poor Marie;

but they know not that I weep for thee now, and that thou hast been taken from us so soon. They will know that too, for I have written of this death to our friends of Ile de France, and I shall feel that thou art mourned by hearts whose grief is most precious.

Philibert is sending us two fans and some seeds of marine plants, gathered by himself and his wife in the bay of Le Tombeau. How I long to have them, to sow them, to see them come to life, shoot up and flower! This I am getting in return for a roseleaf that I sent him last spring. I was holding the rose in my hand, a leaf fell on the letter and I folded it inside; I let it go, saying to myself that it had fallen away to bear to this poor exile a breath of perfume from his native country. And indeed this gave him deep pleasure.

May 18th, 1835.—Who could have guessed what has happened to-day. It has surprised me, engrossed my thoughts and delighted me. I gaze a hundred times with gratitude on my good fortune, my creole poems, addressed to me by a poet of Ile de France. I shall speak of them to-morrow. It is too late at present, but I could not sleep without noting here this event in my day and in my life.

May 19th, 1835.—Here I am at the window, listening to a choir of nightingales who are singing most enchantingly in the Moulinasse. Oh! the beautiful scene! Oh! the beautiful concert that I am leaving, to carry alms to Annette the cripple!

May 22nd, 1835.—Mimi has left me for a fortnight ; she is at ***, and I pity her, such a saintly and good Christian, amidst that heathendom. As Louise once said to me, she has the appearance of a good soul in Purgatory, but we shall take her out of it as soon as the time which propriety demands has passed. As for me, I long for her ; I grow tired of my loneliness, I am so much accustomed to life together. Father is in the fields almost all day, Eran busy hunting ; for company there remain only Trilby and my chickens, who are as noisy as hobgoblins ; they take up my time without curing my *ennui*, because *ennui* is the centre and foundation of my soul to-day. What I love most is incapable of distracting me. I wanted to read, write, pray ; all that lasted only a moment, even prayer tires me. It is sad, O ! Heavens ! Luckily I remembered that saying of Fénelon's : 'If God wearies you, tell Him that He wearies you.' Oh ! I have actually told Him that piece of folly.

May 23rd, 1835.—I have just spent the night writing to you. Daylight has superseded the candle, it is not worth while going to bed. Oh ! if Father knew it !

May 24th, 1835.—How quietly last night slipped away in writing to you, my friend ! the dawn broke while I still thought it was midnight ; nevertheless it was three o'clock, and I had seen many stars go past, for from my table I can see the sky, and occasionally I look at it and consult it ;

and I fancy an angel prompts my thoughts whilst I write. If they come not from on high, whence come so many thoughts, tender, lofty, sweet, true, pure, with which my heart is filled when I speak to thee! Yes, God gives them to me, and I send them to thee. May my letter do you good! It will reach you on Tuesday; I wrote it at night, so as to have it dropped in the post in the morning, and save a day. I was in such a hurry to come and divert your thoughts and strengthen you in that state of weakness and dullness in which I see you! Nay, I do not see it, but I divine it from your letters and some of Félicité's words. Would to Heaven that I might see it and know what makes you suffer! Then I would know where to apply the balm, whereas I am just applying it at random. Oh! how anxious I am about letters from you! Write to me, speak, explain, and show yourself, so that I may know what you are suffering, and what makes you suffer. Sometimes I think it is just a little of the black mood which we have, and which saddens us so much when it overspreads the heart. It is well to get rid of it as soon as possible, for that poison soon seizes us and turns us into madmen or beasts. One desires nothing beautiful or lofty. I know someone who in that state finds pleasure in nothing but eating, and usually he is a soul who is little subject to the senses. That shows how much every passion brutalises us; and melancholy is one which devours, alas! many lives. Those whom it takes possession of I regard as almost lost. Is there a duty to be fulfilled? impossible. They are melancholy men;

ask from them nothing, neither for God nor for themselves, but what their mood calls for.

May 27th, 1835.—In my solitude to-day I have found nothing better to do than to look through old papers, to dwell once more among my old memories, my writings, my thoughts of long ago. I have found some good, that is to say, reasonable, some pious, some exaggerated, some foolish, like this: "If I dared I would ask God why I am in this world. What do I do here? What have I to do? I know not. My days pass away fruitless, so I do not regret them. . . . *If I could* do good to myself or anyone else only one minute each day!" Ah! Heavens! nothing is more easy, I have only to take a glass of water and give it to a poor man. That is how sadness makes us talk wildly and prompts us to say: "What is the good of life, since it wearies me? Why these duties, since they oppress me? Why a heart? Why a soul?" Endless "why's," and one is without power, without will, weary, weeping, unhappy, and withdraws into seclusion, the devil then who sees us alone, arrives to distract us with all his temptations. Then, when they are used up, suicide still remains. Lord! what an end, what madness! and how it increases every day, even in the country. A young peasant of Bleys, rich and the darling of his parents, killed himself through melancholy. Everything wearied him, life above all. He was religious, but not enough to overcome passion. God alone gives will and strength in that terrible struggle, and weak and insignificant as we are, with His aid

we at last get our knee on the giant ; but for that prayer, much prayer, is required, as Christ has taught us, and we must cry : "Our Father !" That cry of a child to its father touches the heart of God, and always gains for us some help. My friend, I long to see you pray like a good child of God. How little it would cost you ? Your heart is naturally loving, and what is prayer but love, a love that flows from the soul outwards, like water from the fountain ? You understand that better than I. M. de la Mennais has spoken some divine words on the matter, that must have penetrated your heart if you could have heard them ; but unfortunately he has said some others which I fear must have spoiled the good effect of the former. What a pity, once more, what a pity that you are under the influence of that strayed genius ! Poor Maurice ! do not let us think of these things.

Mimi has written to me ; she is at M***, an old castle of the Villefranches, where Julia lives with her family. Mimi's visit gives her a sincere pleasure, which she shows by her anxious and tender ways. I know no more, because the traveller wrote on her arrival and gives merely a glimpse.

May 27th, 1835.—I made a mistake of the date yesterday, and was a day ahead ; I make the correction, do not let us go faster than time, which rolls on, alas ! too fast. Is it not already the end of the month, which ends in a fine turmoil ? Whilst I write, thunder, winds, lightening, shaking the chateau, and torrents of rain like a deluge. I

listen to it all from my drenched window, and cannot write here as usual in the evening. That is a great pity, for it is a delightful desk, looking out on that hillock in the garden, so green and fresh and pretty, all perfumed with acacia.

May 28th, 1835.—Our sky to-day is pale and dull, like a beautiful face after a fever. That state of dullness has many charms, and the mingling of verdure and decay, of flowers that open out over fallen flowers, of birds that sing, and little torrents that flow, the stormy air and the air of May, produce an effect so crumpled, so mournful, and so gay, one that I love. But to-day is Ascension day; let us leave the earth and the sky of the earth, let us soar higher than our abode, and follow where Christ has entered. This festival is a beautiful one; it is the festival of the souls unfettered, free, heavenly, who rejoice in what lies beyond the limits of the vision, where God calls them.

May 29th, 1835.—Never did a storm last so long, it is raging yet. For the last three days the thunder and rain have held their revels. All the trees bend under the deluge; it is cruel to see them look so wearied and faint amidst the bright triumph of May. We were saying that to-night at the hall window when we saw the poplars of Le Pontet drooping their heads in utter sadness, like one who bends under adversity. I almost pitied them; it would seem as though all that appears to suffer had a soul.

May 30th, 1835.—Ever, ever rain. It is the

weather for making music or poetry. Everyone yawns, counting the hours that never end. The day is an eternity above all for father, who is so fond of an out-door life and all his diversions. Here he is, like a prisoner, occasionally turning over an old history of the Academy of Berlin, a sleepy, soporific book, which drove me off the moment I touched the volume. Just think ! I have lighted on a volume on the *Theology of Being*. I closed it quickly, I seemed to see a well, a well without water ; the dim void has always a terror for me. There are, however, depths which I enjoy, like the *Existence of God*, by Fénelon. I shall retain the impression which that book made on me, one which gave intense pleasure ; and this would not have been the case, had I not understood it in the least. To feel, one must be touched. I felt, therefore I reason after the fashion of *Salabert*, do I not ? At all events, that book was good for me ; I seemed to know God better both by the intelligence and the heart, as Fénelon did. I should like to possess his religious works, the devotional letters in which Fénelon is so lofty, so tender, so loving. I have those of Bossuet, which are my delight, the others are my envy. When I am on the subject, I want to tell you all my fancies regarding devotional books. For a long time I have been gathering a library, of which the shelves, alas ! are always empty. Here it is : first St. Augustine's *City of God*, his meditations, his sermons, his soliloquies, and other works close to my hand ; the letters of St. Jerome, his treatises on education for little Marcella ; also the letters of St. Gregory of Nazianze ; the poems of St.

Paulinus, Jean Mose's *Pasture of the Soul* ; the works of St. Theresa, of Louis de Blois, the letters of St. Bernard, and his tract to his sister ; the writings of St. Catharine of Genoa, esteemed by Leibnitz ; St. Francis de Sales. I shall continue the list later on ; I must tell my beads.

(No date).—Since this interruption several days have passed, several events at Le Cayla which have kept me far away from my little room ; now here I am for one minute and you shall see my four days, all that time spent without writing ; but no : is it worth while to note down my time ? it is writing on dust. I know not why I fancy that this will please you, this medley of things, of days, and of paper.

Mimi came yesterday with Elisa, to whom I have surrendered my little room. That is to say, I come here less, read less, think less. I am at the disposal of Elisa, I am going for a walk with her.

June 13th, 1835.—Again I take my abandoned diary, and record herein what has come for me to-day : two beautiful books, Lammenais' *Imitation*, and Louis de Blois' *Spiritual Guide*. Thanks to you, Maurice, for this pious remembrance. These will be two relics for our souls and hearts, and we shall pray for you each time we read them, Mimi her *Guide*, and I my *Imitation*.

June 18th, 1835.—M. le Curé has just gone, and has left me a letter from you, which he slipped stealthily into my hand in the presence of all. I thanked him softly and in a trembling voice, then

understanding what it was, I went out to the warren to read your letter at my ease. How quickly I went, how I trembled, how I burned with impatience over the letter in which I was to see you at last ! I have seen you but I do not know you ; you let me see only your head : it is the heart, the soul, it is the inner feelings, what makes up your life, that I expected to see. You show me only your ways of thinking ; you make me ascend, and I, on the other hand, wanted to go down, to know the very foundation of your tastes, your moods, your principles, in a word, to make a tour of inspection into all the nooks and corners of your self. So I am not satisfied with what you tell me ; yet I find in it reason to thank God, for I was prepared for worse. I shall tell you all that in my letter, here it is useless ; my reflections would be ancient history when you read them.

June 19th, 1835.—Am I not unfortunate ? I wanted to write a letter, and made a beginning, but could not continue for lack of ideas. My head is empty at present ; there are moments like that when I feel used up, my mind dried up like a fountain, then it starts to flow once more. Whilst I wait for the water, I admire my turtle-dove who is singing at the top of his voice under my window.

I am going to write to you by stealth, and to disappoint the inquisitive people who come into my room, I shall have two letters, one above the other, and whenever anyone comes I shall only have to turn the paper. Nobody would understand what I tell you, except Mimi, who is in the secret. Father would have difficulty with it, and would be anxious

about you. It is better to keep the truth from him, and to let him believe I am writing to Louise, as I have just told him. So I commence in earnest my double letter, and shall speak with two voices. Let us see.

A marriage party is passing along the Cordes road; a moment ago there came from the same direction the sound of a passing bell; truly, such is life. I see it all on my little table.

July 12th, 1835.—We have lost one of our poor neighbours, Annette, the cripple, she who kissed me so warmly for a bunch of grapes I gave her. Poor girl! I hope she now prays for us in heaven. She died without thinking of it, or rather she thought of it every day, but knew not that her last hour was near.

July 17th, 1835.—A day of mourning. We have lost our grandmother. Early this morning father came into my room. He walked up to my bedside, and pressing my hand, said, "Get up."—"Why?" He pressed my hand again. "Get up,"—"Is there anything wrong, tell me?" "My mother" I understood; I had left her dying.

July 31st, 1835.—What will be the use of continuing this book that I lay down and take up again? A thought occurs to me. If I die before you, I bequeath it to you. It will be almost all I have to leave, but this legacy of the heart will surely have some value for you. So I want to add to its value, so that you may say, "My sister left me all she

could." A fine fortune it will be—a few ideas, some tears, some of the sorrows that make up almost the whole of life! If anything better comes, it is rare, so rare that it intoxicates one, as happens when I receive any gift from Heaven or from those I love.

For the last fortnight I have had many such sweet moments. All my friends have written to me about my grandmother, and make many tender and consoling reflections on her death; but God alone can console. When the heart is stricken with sorrow, it feels the insufficiency of human help, which gives way under it, such is the burden of sorrow. That reed needs another support than reeds. Oh! how well Jesus has said, "Come unto me all ye who labour, and are heavy laden." It is only then, in the bosom of God, that one can find relief in tears. How blessed we Christians are! We have no troubles that God doth not soothe.

August 1st, 1835.—My turtle-dove is dead, I know not from what cause, for she was still singing these last few days. Poor little creature! how I regret her loss! I was so fond of her, she was white, and every morning her's was the first voice I heard under my window, winter and summer alike. Was it joy or mourning? I know not, but these songs were delightful to hear; that is one pleasure less. So, each day, we lose some delight. I shall bury my dove under a rose-bush on the terrace; I fancy that will be a nice place for her, and her soul (if she has one) will repose peacefully in that nest under the flowers. I have a certain belief in the soul of animals, and I would fain have a little paradise for

the good and gentle ones, like turtle-doves, dogs and lambs. What is to be done with wolves and other cruel species? Are they to be damned? That puzzles me. Hell punishes only injustice, and where is the injustice of the wolf who eats the lamb? He is forced to; the need which justifies man justifies the brute, which has received no law superior to instinct. In following its instinct, it is good or bad only in relation to ourselves; there is no *will*, that is to say, choice in the actions of animals, and, consequently, neither good nor evil, neither Heaven nor Hell. Still I am sorry there is no such Paradise, and no doves in heaven. Ah! what is that I say? in Heaven shall we need any earthly thing to be happy?

August 2nd, 1835.—Rain, and a letter from you. That letter was expected because of the events here and at Paris. From home you read of a betrothal and a death, and you had to tell about the infernal machine that burst, and its consequences. Deaths, calamities, tears. How I pity you at Paris having such a volcano beneath you!

August 3rd, 1835.—Nothing.

August 4th, 1835.—To-day I meant to speak about your birth, my joy when I heard of it, and how eager I was to open the portmanteau in which father said he brought you. I meant to say all that, and much more besides about your baptism and your life; but I have been sad, grieved and weeping, and when I weep, I do not write, I only pray; it is all I can do. But now I am a little more cheerful. God has come

to me, then some books, and a letter from Louise, three things that bring me happiness. I began in deep sadness, then came a feeling almost of joy, a feeling that God was in my heart. Oh ! my friend, if you only knew how the troubled soul finds consolation in God ! what strength it gains from the divine power !

The book, I mean the work that pleased me so much, is the Fénelon that father bought me. All my life, I had longed to possess his spiritual letters, so sweet, so heavenly, so suitable for all states, all situations of the soul. I am going to read them and place them in my heart ; I shall make them my consolation, my support, now that M. Bories is going to leave me, and my soul feels like an orphan. I had asked something from God and these letters came to me ; so I look on them as a gift from Heaven. Thanks to God and to my father.

August 20th, 1835. —I have just hung round my neck a medal of the Holy Virgin, which Louise has sent me as a defence against cholera. It is said to be the medal that has performed so many miracles. It is not a point of faith, but there is no harm in believing in it. I believe then in the holy medal as the sacred image of a mother, the sight of whom can do so much good. All my life I shall wear on my heart this holy relic of the Virgin and of my friend, and I shall trust in it if the cholera comes, an evil for which there is no human remedy ; so let us have recourse to the miraculous. We do not rely enough on Heaven, and we tremble. Somehow this cholera which gains ground has no effect on me ;

do not think about it, but for the prayers that the archbishop has ordered. How is that? Can it be indifference? I hope not; no, I should not like to be insensible to anything, not even the plague. Whence do I derive my feeling of security?

August 21st, 1835.—Another ornament for my little room: Saint Teresa, that I have managed at last to get framed. I longed to have that beautiful Saint before my eyes, over the table where I pray, and read, or write. It will inspire me to pray well, to love well, to suffer well. Towards her shall I raise my heart and my eyes in my prayers, in my sorrows. I begin now and say to her, “Look down on me from Heaven, blessed Saint Teresa, look down on me, kneeling before your image, and gazing on the features of one who loved Christ, with a deep desire to impress them on myself. Gain for me this holy likeness, gain for me something of your own goodness. Lend me your eyes with which to look for God, your lips to pray, and your heart to love Him. May I gain your strength in adversity, your sweetness in suffering, your firmness amid temptation.” Saint Teresa endured twenty years of discouragement in her prayers without growing disheartened. That is what surprises me most about her triumphs. I am far from that constancy; but I am glad to remember that when I lost my mother, I went, like Saint Teresa, and threw myself at the feet of the Holy Virgin, and prayed to her to take me as her daughter. It was before the Chapelle du Rosaire, in the Church of Saint Peter at Gaillac. I was then thirteen years old.

August 23rd, 1835. —But for the dream that I dreamt last night, I would not write at all ; but I have seen you, kissed you, spoken to you, and though all that is but illusion, I must tell you it, because it stirred my heart. It is such a grief not to see you, now that the absent ones are coming back ! Raymond has come. I wonder if he brings me a letter from you ? I should be quite delighted to have something all to myself, as I have had on occasions like this. This dear writing is our emblem of life and love, so let us write to each other ; write to me. I have just sent a nine-page letter to Louise. It would be long, endless for any other ; but between us letters are never long enough. The heart when it loves is inexhaustible. I should like to write to you like that. There is a cloud passing, so dark that I can hardly see on my white paper. It reminds me of so many dark thoughts that sometimes pass thus over the soul.

August 24th, 1835. —The morning began pleasantly with a letter from Auguste, who speaks much of you ; our good cousin loves you, that is clear. I am very anxious that this projected journey should be carried out, and would like to go too. Oh ! to come and see you in Paris ! But, no, that would be too lovely for this world ; do not let us think of it. I have a kind of idea that we are not to meet again except in the next world : there is the cholera ; no doubt it will come here. I am waiting, and composing my soul as best I can, so as not to die without due preparation ; which is the only thing to be feared ; for the trouble is not

in quitting this life. I do not say this from any distaste of life ; there are sacred longings for death that come to the Christain soul. Another cloud that makes me leave off. The cloud brought a deluge, thunder, wind, all the turmoil of a storm. Meanwhile I was running hither and thither, thinking of my chickens ; I was warming a shirt for that poor boy who has come in drenched ; at present all is calm and tranquil. The extraordinary does not last long here. My cousin Fontenilles has come to see us ; he will sleep in the little room, my darling retreat which serves for all ; excellent use of human things, all for all. But, my note-book, go inside ; *that is not for the public, it is something confidential, it belongs to the soul, it is for me.*

August 25th, 1835.—Saint Louis to-day ; for a long time a great festival in France ; one which is held only in Heaven, now that the kings are departing. Saint Louis, pray for France and for your descendants ; gain for them the Kingdom of Heaven !

August 26th, 1835.—What an admirable thing grace is ! To-day I am admiring it in Saint Genesius, whom it converted to a Christain as he was acting the mysteries of Christianity in a theatre. All at once God showed himself to that soul, and the actor became a martyr.

August 27th, 1835.—My mind is deeply touched and affected by the letter I received from M. de La Morvonnais this morning ; he speaks to me of Marie,

of the other world, of his sorrows, of you, of death, of those things I love so much. That is why these letters afford me a pleasure that I am afraid of feeling too keenly, because all pleasure is to be feared. But it was your wish, and out of love for you alone I have kept up this correspondence, which now will have many charms, that of sympathy in the first place. As you told me, I notice in your friend a cast of thought towards the religious and the sad, very like my own; his soul often weeps and prays like mine.

To-day he tells me that his prayers are lacking in fervour and purpose, and that I must help him in the sight of God. Indeed I shall do so, for his soul is dear to me, and that suffering soul claims my pity. So I shall pour upon him the balm of prayer, which, far off as I am, will come to him through Heaven. Such at least is my belief: wonderful faith, which grants me the hope of consoling one in affliction. It is in this respect that the correspondence gives me pleasure: it is so sweet to do good: to console him that weeps is divine. Jesus did this on earth, and from Him I learn. Yes, my dear, from the cross come these thoughts that your friend feels so sweet, so *unspeakably* tender. Nothing of it is mine. I am conscious of my own arid nature, but God when He wills sends an ocean over this waste of sand. So is it with so many simple souls from whom there issues much that is to be admired, because they are in direct communion with God, though they are destitute of knowledge and of pride. So I am losing my love of books; I say to myself:

What do they teach me that I shall not know one day in Heaven? Let God be my master and my study! I act this and feel benefited; I read little, go out little and repress my feelings. There, in my heart, much is said, done, felt, much happens. Oh! if you saw it all! but what is the good of showing it? God alone must penetrate into the sanctuary of the soul. My soul to-day overflows with prayer and poetry. It is wonderful how these two streams flow together in me and in others. The blind man sings and prays as he goes on his way, the soldier on the battlefield, the mariner on the seas, the poet to his lyre, the priest at the altar; the child who begins to speak, the recluse in his cell, the angels in Heaven, the saints throughout the whole earth, all pray and sing; there are none but the dead who neither sing nor pray: poor dead!

August 28th, 1835.—Saint Augustine to-day: a saint that I love so much because he has loved so much. Besides I bear his name, and I have prayed to him to give also a little of his soul. Beautiful soul! how divinely it is depicted in his *Confessions*! At each word of that book we feel the love of God penetrating drop by drop into our heart, however hard it may be. Why cannot my memory keep it all? But unfortunately mine is so fleeting, that I might as well not read at all; it was not always so. It is because I am decaying and all my faculties are drooping, except that of love. Love is the soul that never dies, but goes on growing, ascending like flame. I have a letter from Louise,

my beautiful friend, who always tells me that she loves me. That letter is short, three pages only, because she was in a hurry, all taken up with her sister the countess who had just arrived. It is in her arms that Louise tells me the tender message that contents me to-day. The abbé de Bayne d'Alos was the bearer, coming from Rayssac.

August 29th, 1835.—Beautiful sky, beautiful sunshine, beautiful day. It is something to rejoice over, for fine weather is here at present, and I feel it a blessing. Beautiful nature, pure air, and a radiant sky are certainly a blessing; faint images of the celestial abode, they make us think of God. I am going to-night to Cahusac, my beloved pilgrimage. Meanwhile I am going to examine my soul, and to see what have been its relations with God for the last week, this examination enlightens, teaches and helps the heart wonderfully in the knowledge of God and of oneself. Was there not a philosopher who enjoined this exercise thrice a day on his disciples? And his disciples did it. I wish to do the same in the school of Jesus, that I may learn to grow wise, with a Christian wisdom.

August 31st, 1835.—I spent yesterday at Cahusac, and some hours alone in grandmother's house. First I knelt on a stool on which she used to pray, then I went through her room, I looked at her chairs, her armchair, her furniture all in disorder, as when one is removing; I saw her bed *empty*; I went everywhere she had gone, and I recalled these lines of Bossuet: "But a moment and others

will pass where I once was, and will find me no longer there. There was his room, there his bed, you will say, and of all that there remains only my tomb where it will be said that I am, and *I shall not be there.*" Oh! what a feeling of our nothingness in that absence even from the tomb, so quick the scattering of our dust in the caverns of death! To-morrow I make a change and go to Cahuzac for some repairs to the house, which will detain me a few days. They will be notable days, so I want to record them and take my journal with me. I shall write to Antoinette, my angel friend.

It is some hours since I wrote here last. I have written to Antoinette and to Irène, and yet I had nothing, almost nothing to tell them. My life furnishes little material, and it is the same with Le Cayla, because everything is quiet here. But these communications of the heart are sweet, and I abandon myself to them without resistance. Besides, that does me good, and relieves my soul of its burden of sorrow. When a stream flows it hurries away with its foam and is purified in its course. My own course is God or a friend, but God above all. There I make my bed and find peace.

September 1st, 1835.—Here I am at Cahusac in another little room, my elbows on a little table where I am writing. Everywhere I require table and paper, for my thoughts follow me everywhere and seek to overflow in some place for you, my friend. Sometimes I have an idea that you will find in them a certain charm, and that idea smiles upon me and induces me to go on; but for that my heart would often remain

sealed up, through indolence or through indifference towards all that arises from myself.

I have sometimes childish delights, like that of coming here for a few days. You could hardly believe how gaily I came to take possession of this deserted house. You see it is because I find myself alone there, quite alone, in a place which aids reflection. I hear the footsteps of the passers-by without even turning my head ; I am close to the church, I hear even the last vibration of the bell as it rings noon or the Angelus, I listen to it all as to a harp. Then, when I wish, I go to prayer, and to confession : that is enough for some days of happiness, happiness of my very own. Father will come to see me this afternoon. That visit gives me as much pleasure as if we had been long separated.

A little while ago the devil tempted me in a little cabinet where I found some novels. Read one word, I said to myself, let us look at this one, or that one ; but the titles disgusted me. They were *Love Letters of a Nun*, *The Confessions of a Lady Killer*, and some other tales of good reputation. Shame ! that I should read such things ! I am no longer tempted now, and am only going to remove them to another cabinet, or rather throw them into the fire.

September 22nd, 1835.—Since the day I came back from Cahusac, my confidant slept in a corner and it would sleep there still if it were not the 22nd of September, the day of St. Maurice, your patron saint, which has brought me a gleam of joy and reawakened my heart to the pleasure of writing and leaving a memory here. I remember that last year

also on the same day, I was writing to you and speaking of your birthday. I was happy, I saw *to-day* and you, hoping to kiss you on St. Maurice's day, and there you are a hundred leagues away. Ah ! how badly we reckon, and how little we should reckon in this life.

M. le Curé and his sister came to celebrate your saint's day, and to drink your health. But, best of all, M. le Curé remembered you at mass and Françoise prayed for you also. May St. Maurice protect you and strengthen you in the battles of life ! Will you bring me back the image of him that I gave you ?

(No date).—Do not be surprised at the gaps in this journal, nor even if it should be given up altogether ; I care little to write what goes on, sometimes not at all unless the thought of giving you pleasure occurs to me. Sometimes that thought puts the pen in my hand and dictates endlessly. But, my friend, will you ever read what I write. Will it do you good to see thus right to the depths of my soul ? That thought restrains me and causes me to say little, or nothing, for months at a time. To-day, Sunday morning, in my room, before my crucifix and my Saint Teresa, my soul found calm. Then I felt that I would not harm you, and once more I abandon myself to the charm of letting my thoughts flow. Let us say nothing of the past. That shall be a blank.

November 19th, 1835.—To-day, November 19th, I found my poor diary, abandoned, and already gnawed

by the rats ; and the fancy has taken me to commence once more and go on with the writing. This does me good, diverts me in my solitude ; but I have left it off many times, and shall leave it off again. Still I shall fill my page to-day, and to-morrow, well, we shall see. I feel changed. My books, my poems, the birds that I loved, I forget them ; all that kept my heart and my head busy, and now No, I am not doing right and I am not happy since this renunciation of the affections of my life. Are they not innocent enough to be permissible ? Why ! the hermits of the Thebaid busied themselves in no other way. I see them working, reading, praying, writing, some singing, others making mats and baskets ; all toiling for God, who blessed the work of each. So I offer Him all my days and all that fills them, be it work or prayer, writing or thoughts, or even this little diary that I should like to see blessed.

(No date).—I have spent the day in complete solitude, quite alone ; Father is at the fair at Cordes, Eran dining at the parsonage, Mimi at Gaillac. They are all dispersed, and I, for my part, have thought and felt what that longer separation means which, alas ! must happen some day. But I should not dwell upon sad thoughts that pain me so much. Such things are to the soul what clouds are to the eyes.

November 19th, 1835.—Alas ! still more tears ! In vain we struggle against grief, each day brings some new affliction, some loss. Now we are weeping for our poor cousin De Thézac who loved

us. Oh ! doubtless he is happier than we now, he must be in Heaven, for he suffered much. His patience was admirable during his life of sorrow and amidst his last trials. Mimi, whom I was expecting, could not come ; she remained beside the invalid, helped him and exhorted him in his last moments, speaking to him of Heaven. Oh ! how well Mimi can say these things, and how I should like to have her by my side when I die ! Father has gone to see the bereaved family, and I am alone in my room with my thoughts in mourning, and the thousand voices of the wind moaning like organs for the dead. Amid this accompaniment it would be sweet to pray, to write, but what should I write ? A little sleep would do me more good. Repose of body communicates itself to the soul. I am going to bed, then, after a *de profundis* for the dead and a remembrance of you in the sight of God. May he give thee a good night ! I never fall asleep without thinking of your sleep. Who knows, I ask myself, if Maurice is as well as he would be here, where I should have his bed made for him ? Who knows if he is not cold ? Who knows. . . . And a thousand other tender thoughts, too tender.

December 1st, 1835.—I am thinking of the grave that is opening this morning at Gaillac to swallow up these mortal remains until God brings them to life again. It is the lot that awaits us all, to be cast upon the earth and decay in the furrows of death before we bloom forth as flowers ; but then how blessed we shall be to live and even to

have lived ! Immortality will teach us the value of life and what we owe to God for having brought us forth out of nothingness. It is a boon of which we hardly take account, and which we enjoy carelessly, for often life gives no pleasure. But what does that matter to the Christian ? Through tears or rejoicing he goes on his way towards Heaven ; his goal is there, what he meets on the way can hardly turn him aside. Do you think that if I were hastening to you a flower by the way or a thorn in the foot would check me ?

Here I am at the close of a day filled with a thousand thoughts and diverse matters that I ponder over as I sit by the fireside in my room, by the light of a little lamp, my only companion at night. But for the misfortune at Gaillac, I should have Mimi by my side, and we should be talking, I telling her what I tell here to my silent confidant.

December 2nd, 1835.—Nothing interesting but the arrival of a little dog who is to replace Lion for the sheep. He is handsome and affectionate, I like him and am trying to think of a name. It should be Polydor, in memory of the dog at La Chênaie ; but that is too fine a name for a shepherd's dog : better Battle for the champion of the flock.

The air is mild this morning, the birds sing as in spring, and a gleam of sunshine visits my room. This is what I like, and lonely as it is, I delight in it, as if it were one of the most beautiful spots in the world. My fancy transforms it into what-

ever I want, a salon, a church, an academy. I sit here when I please with Lamartine, Chateaubriand, Fénelon: a whole company of spirits surround me; then there are the saints, St. Theresa, St. Louis, the patron saint of my friend Louise, and a small image of the Annunciation in which I contemplate a sweet mystery and the purest creations of God, the angel and the Virgin. These are my sources of pleasure here, which block up my door against all that is to be seen elsewhere. But, no, I would not care for it long, at the least rumour of letters or of news I should sally forth to read or listen, to-day above all when I am expecting something from Mimi and from you. You are neglecting me; here is a month gone and more since you have written. The day will seem long to me; to shorten it I will write to Louise. I have got two letters from her, two treasures, two little marvels of wit and tenderness. Oh! what letters! all these rare things are for me, and I feel sad with it all! Whatever would you have, poor heart?

December 3rd, 1835.—A letter from Mimi! How much a letter brings, and how charming it is to listen to those who are far from us and whom we cannot see for a long time yet! That voice of the heart brings them near and seems to say: They are there; in these pages behold their soul, their love, behold their thoughts, their actions; their whole being is contained there, the outer covering alone is wanting. And this consoles us greatly for their absence. If ever you read this, I wish I could

persuade you how deep is the pleasure I get from your letters, and how deep the disappointment when they do not come. No doubt you will write oftener in future.

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December 4th, 1835.—A letter from Mimi, and one from Louise, arrival of Paul, joy, joy, joy! I have no time to write.

December 5th, 1835.—To-day within a few hours I shall be at Gaillac, far from here, far from Father, far from my little room, from all that makes up my life. Not a moment to write. How sorry I am to go away! But I am going to be with Mimi for a day, which consoles me.

Do you wish it, my dear, this diary written during those two years? It is old, but all that pertains to the heart is eternal. Time, as it seems to me, makes no change. I shall hand these over to you then, after a few strokes of my pen, a few lines erased. When one goes back over the past, there are things to erase. There are so many mistakes! We even talked nonsense with you one day while we were taking a walk.

III.

I am changing the size of my Journal to make it more convenient for my pocket, where I put it when I go for a walk. So we shall see in it all I see when I go out, when I go into society, or into the country. I see, I hear, I feel, I think a thousand things then which please me, displease me, surprise me, that I should like to note somewhere. It would be useful for me to see what I am when away from home, when I mingle in the world, in its talk, in its rejoicings, and in all that is not my wont. Then there goes on within me something new; strange thoughts and feelings visit me, and I feel that I am not like others, nor like myself here. I am conscious of this state when I am in it, but without attending to it closely, and yet it would be good to see to what this leads me. I shall return to the point later on; at present I have something better to do than to write; I am going to pray. Oh! how I love prayer!

I wish everybody knew how to pray; I wish that the children and the aged, the poor, they that mourn, the sick in body and soul, all that live and suffer, could feel the balm of prayer.

But I know not how to speak of these things. These thoughts cannot find utterance.

Our new curé came to see us to-day. He is a quiet, cheerful man who bears on his face the stamp of a beautiful soul. I believe he has wit, but he shows none; his conversation is most commonplace, without either character or brilliance, passing quite simply from one topic to another. I remark only that his replies are straightforward and his words to the point. He is the simple pastor of simple souls, full of God, and nothing more.

December 11th, 1835.—I have a great joy in my heart to-day: Éran has gone to confession. I have great hopes of this confession with the gentle curé who knows so well how to speak of God's mercy. To-day is, moreover, Father's birthday.

December 12th, 1835.—A moment ago I was admiring a little scene in my room, which was lit up by the rising sun. How pretty it was! Never have I seen more beautiful effects of light on the paper, through trees in a painting. It was clear, transparent. It was lost on my eyes, it ought to have been seen by a painter. But does not God make the *beautiful* for everybody? All the birds were singing this morning whilst I prayed. This accompaniment is agreeable, though somewhat distracting. I stop to listen; then I recommence, fancying that the birds and I are singing our hymns to God and perhaps these

little creatures sing better than I. But the charm of prayer, of communion with God, they do not know that, to feel that one must have a soul. I have that blessing that the birds have not. It is only nine o'clock and I have already passed through the phases of joy and sadness. How little is needed for that! The joyous phase is the sunshine, the mild air, the song of the birds, blessings for me; then a letter from Mimi, who is at Gaillac, wherein she speaks of Madame Vialar, who has seen you, and of other cheerful matters. But amidst all that I learn of the departure of M. Bories, that good and worthy father of my soul. Oh! how I miss him! What a loss I have suffered in being deprived of that trusty guide of my conscience, my heart, my intelligence, my whole being which God had entrusted to him, and which I left to his care so fearlessly! I am sad with an inner sadness that brings tears from the soul. O Lord, in my wilderness, whom shall I ask for aid? Who will uphold me in those moments when the spirit grows faint? Who will lead me to the great sacrifice? It is in that most of all that I miss M. Bories. He knows what God has put in my heart, I required his strength to be able to follow him. Our new Curé cannot replace him: he is so young! then he seems so inexperienced, so lacking in decision! One must be strong to draw a soul from the midst of the world and support it against the assaults of the flesh! It is Saturday, a day of pilgrimage to Cahusac; I am going there; perhaps I shall return more calm. God is always giving me

blessing there, in that chapel, where I have left so many cares behind.

I was wrong in thinking that I would return in a calmer state of mind. M. Bories is not going away. How happy I am, and how I have thanked God for this mercy! It is a very great mercy to keep for me this kind father, this worthy guide, this *chosen* of God for my soul, to use the expression of Saint Francis de Sales. I have just written this news to Mimi. Confession is a sweet thing, a great joy, a great blessing for the Christian soul, always greater the more we find satisfaction in it, and the more the heart of the priest wherein we pour our tears resembles the divine heart that has loved us so much. That is why I am attracted to M. Bories. *You* will understand me.

On my way to Cahuzac I wanted to visit a poor sick woman who lives on the other side of La Vère. She is the woman who sang the lament of the *Rose Bush* that I told you, I think. Ah! what poverty! On entering I saw a pallet whence there rose up a skull or something very like it. Still she knew me. I wanted to go close up and speak to her, and I saw some water, a quagmire close to the bed, filth soaked by the rain that falls from the wretched roof, and by a spring that oozes under the wretched bed. It was pestilence, squalor, foul rags, vermin: that she should live there! poor creature! Without fire, without bread, without water to drink, she lay on a heap of hemp and potatoes which she kept there to protect them from the frost. A woman, who followed us, lifted her out of this muck-heap, another brought sticks,

and we made a fire. We placed her on a stool, and as I was fatigued I sat beside her on what was left of the sticks. I spoke to her of God ; nothing is easier than to gain the ear of the poor, the unfortunate, the forlorn ones of this world when one speaks to them of Heaven. For there is nothing in their heart that keeps them from listening. So how easy it is to console them, to make them resigned to death ! The ineffable peace of their souls is to be envied. Our patient is happy, and nothing is more surprising than to find happiness in the home of such a creature, in such a dwelling. It is a hundred times worse than a pig-sty. I saw no place to lay down my shawl without soiling it, and as it was cumbersome on my shoulders, I threw it over the branches of a willow that grew in front of the door.

December 14th, 1835.—A visit of a child cut short my story yesterday. I was not sorry to leave it. I love children as much as the aged poor. One of the children is very pretty, lively, alert, and fond of asking questions ; he wanted to see and know everything. He watched me writing, and took the sand-sprinkler for a pepper-box with which I was preparing the paper. Then he made me take down my guitar which hangs on the wall, to see what it was ; he put his little hand on the strings and was delighted to hear them sound. "What is it that sings like that ?" The wind that was blowing strongly at the window astonished him also ; my room was for him an enchanted spot, something he will long remember, just as I would if I had seen the palace of Armida. My

Christ, my St. Theresa, and the other drawings I have in my room pleased him greatly, he wanted to have them and to see them all at once, and his little head turned like a windmill. I watched his doings with endless pleasure, quite delighted in my turn with these charms of childhood. How a mother must feel to these pretty creatures !

When I had given little Antoine all that he wanted, I asked him for one of his curls, offering him one of mine. He looked at me rather surprised : " No," he said, " mine are prettier." He was right : hair at the age of thirty is very ugly beside his fair curls. I could get nothing but a kiss. These child's kisses are very sweet : it was as though a lily had been laid on my cheek.

That visit began my day yesterday. To-day has nothing more agreeable ; so I leave it blank. All my time has been taken up with household duties. Now, alone in my room, I am resting. I would read, I would write much, I know not on what, but I would write. I feel in the mood. It would be a fine moment for poetry, and I am sorry that I have none in the making. Shall I commence one ? No, it is too late, night is made for sleep, unless one be Philomelus ; and even if I were to commence something, to-morrow, perhaps, I should leave it to the rats. This reflection carries me down quickly to the foundation of all things, and in all I see nothingness, if God be not there.

December 20th. 1835.—A short gap. I leap from the 14th to the 20th. I find so little to tell of my days, which are as much alike as drops of

water, that I say nothing. It is really not worth spending ink and time on that, and perhaps my time would be better devoted to something else. But I constantly feel the need to write and to confide my thoughts. I speak when I like to this little book; I tell it all, thoughts, sorrows, joys, emotions, everything, in short, except what can be said to God alone, and yet I am loth to leave anything in the bottom of my heart. But I believe it would be wrong to bring that forth, and conscience comes between my pen and my paper. Then I am silent. If that surprises you, my friend, with what you know of my life, remember that Mary the Egyptian was sorely tormented in solitude. There are evil spirits abroad in the air.

To-day, and for some time, I have been calm, peace of head and of heart, a state of grace for which I thank God. My window is open, how calm things are! All the faint noises from without reach me; I love the noise of the brook. Adieu, I hear a church clock strike, and another answering it. This sounding of the hours in the distance and in the hall assumes in the night a certain air of mystery. I think of the trappists who awake to pray, of the sick who count the hours of suffering, of those in affliction who weep, of the dead who sleep in their cold couch. Oh! how the night brings serious thoughts! I am sure the wicked, the impious, the unbelieving, are not so obdurate by night as by day. A gentleman who has doubts about many things has often told me that by night he always believed in hell. For apparently by day outside objects

intrude upon our thoughts and distract the soul from truth. But what was I going to say? I had such nice things to speak of. I received your ribbon to-night, the net, the little box, with the beautiful pin and the pretty little note. All that I have touched, tried, examined and put in my heart. Thanks, thanks! You are anxious that I should sleep, I tear myself away from here. Why sleep instead of writing?

December 22nd, 1835.—Yesterday passed without my being able to tell you anything, thanks to the work and routine of housekeeping, these currents of duties that carry off all my time and my whole self as well, except the heart that mounts upwards and goes off in the direction it loves. Sometimes it is here, sometimes there, at Paris, at Alby where Mimi is, on the mountains, in Heaven sometimes, or in a church, in short, wherever I wish; for I am free amidst my fetters, and I feel the truth of the words in the *Imitation*, that one can pass as though free from care through the cares of life. But these cares weigh upon the soul, they tire and they weary it often, and it is then it yearns for solitude. Oh! the blessed state in which one can busy oneself only with the mere necessities, or, at least, in which the material cares are light and do not take up the greater part of the day! Here, for forty labourers or carpenters, or some such workmen, I have had to stay the live-long day in the kitchen, with my hands in the ovens or in the dough-nuts.

Oh! how much I should have preferred to be here with a pen or a book! I would have written to you,

I would have told you how pleased I was with the gifts you sent, and I know not what next ; that would be nicer than plates of soup. But why should I complain and so lose the merit of a vexation ! Let us make the soup with a good grace ; the saints would smile on all, and Catharine of Sienna is said to have done her cooking with great delight. She found therein much food for meditation. I quite believe it, if it were only the sight of the fire and the little burns which one gets and which make me think of purgatory.

April 7th, 1836.—Many days have gone since I wrote anything here : the holy week, the great festival of Easter, all these solemnities that keep the soul far from this earth. I have hardly stayed here at all except for meals. On Monday I was at Cahusac, and again the following day, detained by rain. I spent Wednesday at Andillac along with M. le Curé and little Virginie, in arranging the chapel for Easter Thursday.

April 11th, 1836.—A gap of several days. I find myself at present on a torn page, an accident which will not prevent me from writing. Besides I know that such a thing happens often to the paper of the heart. Would you like to know why there is so little connection in what I write in my Journal ? It is because I am taken up with a thousand things that fill all my moments with duties and tasks. This is only a relaxation, a time of rest that I devote to you when I can, at night or in the morning, at any

hour, for at all hours one can talk when it is the heart that speaks. A fly, the creaking of a door, a thought that comes, I know not what ; so many things that I touch, or see, or feel, would make me write volumes. I was reading Bernardin last night, the first volume of the *Studies*, which he commences with a strawberry plant, that strawberry which he describes with such charm, such wit, such heart, which, he says, would make him write volumes without end, the study of which with the relations of that plant to all the kingdoms of nature would be enough to fill the life of the most learned naturalist. My friend, I am that strawberry plant in relation to the earth, the air, the sky, the birds, to so many things visible and invisible, that I should never have done if I started to describe them to myself, without counting what lives in the folds of the heart, like these insects that lodge in the thickness of a leaf. About all that, my friend, what a volume !

Here under my pen is a tiny creature who moves along, not bigger than the dot of an *i*. Who knows where it is going, what it lives on, if it has not some sorrow in its heart ? Who knows if it is not seeking some Paris where it has a brother ? It is going very fast. I stop in its way ; then it is off the page ; how far away it is ! I scarcely see it, I see it no longer. *Bon Voyage*, little creature, God lead you to the place you want to go ! Shall we meet again ? Have I frightened you ? I am so huge in your eyes, no doubt ! But perhaps for that very reason, I elude you like an immensity. My little animal would lead me far, if I lingered over this thought : that in the same way, in the eyes of God,

I am a small, an infinitely small creature that He loves.

Every evening I read one of Lamartine's *Harmonies*; I learn passages of them by heart, and this study delights me and makes something shoot forth from my heart, transporting me far from my book, which falls from my hands; far from those who are speaking close around me; I find myself among these *spirits who balance the stars over our heads, and live on fire as we live on air*

I shall always regret not having finished my *Poetry for the Young*; but for that I should have needed to be quiet in my room like a bee in its hive. Sometimes I have felt a desire to be in prison, so as to devote myself to study and poetry. Oh! what delight to live free from all distractions, alone with God and myself, with that part of us that thinks, feels, loves and suffers!

May 15th, 1836.—We have M. Bories, our Curé, to-day, the Faciens and a few other people. I leave them at play and withdraw to spend a moment of my day speaking to you. It is one of those days I notice, which charm me with a beautiful sky and with agreeable incidents. First of all, on rising, I received a letter from our friend in Brittany whom I thought dead. How delighted I was with that writing, those expressions of pure attachment, those overflowings of a pious and sorrowful soul! Poor friend, in what dejection I see thee! I would fain console him, help him. He speaks of poetry as a balm; I must send him some. I am very busy, but the care of the sick comes before everything else.

God blesses this good work. Let us see then how much poetry is left in my soul. I fear it has long been quenched, and that I am letting it die. Only this poor afflicted friend was capable of kindling it again. I already feel something in me which revives, and begins to shoot forth from my soul. I got this letter from the hands of Pouffé who seemed to me like one of these dwarfs charged with mysterious messages for the castles. My best thanks to the hunchback, and there I was on the slope of Sept-Fonts reading my beautiful letter. Then I pondered over these words come from the shores of the ocean to the woods of Le Cayla ; on that unknown soul speaking to mine like a sister to a sister ; on what brought about a correspondence, on Brittany, on La Chênaie, and its great recluse, on you, on poor Marie, on her tomb. There I dwelt upon that pious thought, that I must pray for her, and I prayed. Then in leaving I took some flowers for our altar to the Virgin, and listened to the nightingale, touched to the heart by these sad thoughts and this gladness of nature, the contrast, alas ! of things human.

(No date.)—Whilst busy counting a little while ago, I was anxious to know how many minutes I had lived. It is frightful, 168 millions and some thousands¹ ! So much time already in my life ! I understand its swiftness better, now that I measure it in particles. The Tarn does not gather grains of sand more quickly on its banks. God ! what have we made of these moments that thou must count thus some day ? Will there be any

¹ She calculates wrongly and adds a zero too many.

that count for eternal life? Will there be many? Will there be even one? *Si observaveris, Domine, Domine, quis sustinebit?*

This reckoning of time appals the soul that attempts it, however short be its span of life, for God will not judge us as he does the lilies of the fields. I have never understood the security of those who trust to no other support than good deeds when they must appear before God, as if all our duties were contained within the narrow circle of this world. To be a good father, a good son, a good citizen, a good brother, is not all that is wanted for entrance into Heaven. God asks other qualities than these kindly virtues of the heart, from him whom he would crown with an eternity of glory.

IV.

May 1st, 1837.—Here, my friend, I wish to resume that communion of the heart that pleases us and is necessary to us, to you in the world, and to me in my solitude. I am sorry I did not continue it, now that I have read your letter in which you tell me why you had not replied. I feared I was wearying you with the details of my life, and I see it is the contrary. No more anxiety on that point, no more doubt about your friendship, nor about anything that belongs to your brotherly heart. I was wrong: so much the better, I feared it was you. With all joy and freedom let us continue our chats, those secret, intimate, stolen chats that stop at the least noise, the least look. The heart does not like to be overheard in its confidences. You are right when you say that I use a little craft in writing my books; I have certainly read some of it to Father, but not all. Dear Father would perhaps be a little uneasy at what I say, at what sometimes comes into my mind; a tinge of sadness would seem to him a real sorrow. Let us hide from him these little clouds; it is better that he should not see them or know any other side of my nature than the calm and serene. A daughter should be so

kind to her father ! We ought to be to them almost what the angels are to God. Among brothers it is different, there is less consideration and more ease. You shall know the story of my life and of my heart, just as it is.

May 2nd, 1837.—Two letters from Louise, sweet, tender, but sad. My poor friend is encompassed with deaths and is now mourning a neighbour, the mother of Mélanie, of whom I have spoken to you, I think. She is that poor country girl who was taken from the fields among the mountains, dressed as a young lady and brought up at Toulouse, where she mixes with the ladies of Villèle. Her education has been a success and the young lady is veiling over the peasant in a most delightful way. There will be two lives in her life. I find her interesting, more than ever now that the poor orphan is mourning her mother, and, amidst her grand salons, is broken-hearted that she could not be at the bedside of her poor mother. Louise tells me that she will not return to Rayssac, where there is no longer any tie for her ; but will enter a convent. That is the abode of sorrowing souls, who are either strangers in the world, or are faint-hearted and take shelter there as in a dove-cot.

May 3rd, 1837.—The nightingale is singing, the sky is bright, quite new things in this late spring. That is something I might speak of for a moment, but I leave you to attend to useful occupations. This is only a pastime : a pen is but the toy of a woman's heart. With you men it is different

May 4th, 1837.—Nothing but the date ; I could not write, having spent the day at Cahuzac, a poor place which offers little to talk about.

May 5th, 1837.—Rain, chill wind, wintry sky, the nightingale, which now and again sings under the dead leaves ; it is sad in the month of May. I am sad likewise, in spite of myself. I wish my soul were not so dependent on the state of the air, and of the seasons, and would not open out and close its petals like a flower in the sunshine or cold. I do not understand why, but it is so as long as it is enclosed in this fleshly vessel.

To amuse myself, I turned over the pages of Lamartine, the dear poet. I love the hymn to the nightingale and many others of his *Harmonies*, but these are far from producing the same effect on me as the *Meditations*. These were once a delight and ecstasy ; I was sixteen years old ; how lovely it was ! Time changes many things. The great poet no longer stirs my heart ; to-day he could not even divert my thoughts.

Let us try something else, for we must shake off the *ennui* that gnaws the soul. I liken it to these little worms that live in the wood of chairs and furniture, whose crack-crack I hear in my room when they are at work, turning their dwelling into dust. What is to be done, then ? It is not good for me to write, to give utterance to that mysterious unrest. Let the mud sink to the bottom, then let the water flow, not sooner. Let us leave books and pens, I know something better. I have tried it a hundred times ; it is prayer, prayer

which soothes me. When, in the presence of God, I say to my soul: "Why art thou sad, and why dost thou trouble me?" something answers and breathes peace into the soul, almost as when a weeping child sees its mother. For the divine compassion and tenderness for us are like those of a mother.

May 6th, 1837.—St John of Damascus was forbidden to write to any one, and, for having composed some verses for a friend, he was expelled from his monastery. That seemed to me very harsh; but how much wisdom is to be seen in it, when after his supplications and much humility, the Saint returns into grace, and is ordered to write and employ his talents in combatting the enemies of Christ! He was thought strong enough to enter the lists when he had stripped himself of pride. He wrote against the iconoclasts. Oh! if so many writers had commenced by a lesson of humility, they would not have made so many mistakes nor so many books. Pride brings forth many books; so we may see the fruits they produce, in the number of errors into which the erring ones lead us.

But it is too wide for me, this chapter on the science of evil; I would rather tell how I sewed a sheet and how I sewed many things into my seam. A sheet provides much food for meditation; it is destined to cover so many people, so many sleeps of such different kinds! perhaps that of the tomb. Who knows if it will not be my shroud, if those stitches I make will not be undone by the worms!

Meanwhile Father was telling me that he had sent, without my knowledge, some Verses to Rayssac, and I saw the letter in which M. de Bayne spoke of them and said they were well done. This roused my vanity a little and it fell into my seam. At present I tell myself the thought of death is good for keeping us from sin. It checks our joy, tempers our sadness, makes us feel that what is past is past. I have some excellent meditations on this in a book I have just got, the *Retreat*, by Père Judde. How I love that book, and how indebted I am to him who told me about it!

May 7th, 1837.—Something turned me aside from my subject yesterday when I wished to speak to you about my little library, about the books I have and the books I would like to have. Saint Theresa is wanting, her letters so full of the piety of the soul. I have seen a copy at a servant's house, poor girl! But who knows? perhaps she understands them better than I. Holy matters are within reach of the heart and of every pious intelligence. I have often noticed this, and that a person who in the eyes of the world seems simple and ignorant, a Rose Drouille, is thoroughly versed in intellectual matters, in the matters that pertain to God. I know many clever people who are stupid: like two gentlemen who would not admit that God was good, because he imposes laws on us that we find irksome, because there is a hell. They think the rules about fasting, the belief in original sin, absurd, and the worship of

images stupid. Poor people ! that there should be men who pose as authorities on these sacred things, holy hieroglyphics which they read without understanding, and call foolish !

Our peasants are taking part in these questions, one of them quoted the Council of Trent to our Curé in an instance where this knowledge was by no means becoming. To join in the interpretation of the councils and to leave the *Paternoster* unsaid, how deplorable ! That is what education is doing in our country districts, the education of the alphabet ; for it is because they can read that the people fancy themselves learned. Mounted on their pride, they touch the most exalted things, and regard as within their reach what they ought to contemplate on their knees. They want to see, understand, grasp, and they are moving straight to unbelief. They who once believed all must now have their belief demonstrated to them. Our peasants have lost much by their contact with books, and what have they learned but another kind of ignorance, to despise their duties ? It makes me pity these poor people. Far better if they could not read, unless they are taught at the same time what reading is good for them. In the mountains, at Rayssac, they all read, but it is the catechism, mass-book and works of piety. That is the aim of schools and what they ought to teach there ; religion ; the making of good Christians. At Andillac and elsewhere they are taught to sign their names and to say, " How learned I am ! "

But this digression has led me far from my books of which I was speaking. My collection grows ;

now and again I add something. From D'Alby, I brought back the new *Mary's Month* by the Abbé Le Guillou, a sweet and pleasing book, full of flowers of devotion. I read a portion of it every morning. We celebrate *Mary's Month* in our room before a beautiful image of the Virgin that Françoise gave to Mimi. Beneath is a framed crucifix that belonged to our grandmother, higher up St. Theresa, and higher still the little picture of the Annunciation that you know, so that when the eye falls on them, it follows quite a celestial line and rises up : it is a ladder leading to Heaven.

June 5th, 1837.—What shall I tell you now ; that it rains, that the sky absolutely refuses to shine upon us. May will depart, I fear, without sunshine, flowers, or verdure. Our woods are as in winter, dry and bare. Sometimes the nightingale sings with a sad air, and I pity him there without any shelter. It is a time of calamity, there is suffering everywhere. The air is unwholesome, one hears nothing spoken about but the dead and the dying. The influenza is making great ravages. It is another cholera, which in certain places almost decimates the population. At Toulouse as many as sixty people a day have died. Here nothing happens either to ourselves or to our servants ; happy people that we are, far from cities and their contagion ! We lack so many things, that those we enjoy are very sweet, and every day I thank God for them, every day I feel happy to have woods, rivers, meadows, sheep, hens that lay, in short to live in my pretty, quiet Le Cayla with a

family that loves me. How many more agreeable places are there in the world?

You are all that is missing, dear member that the body claims. When shall we have you? Apparently nothing is being settled about that. So we pass our lives without seeing each other. It is sad, but let us resign ourselves to all that God wills or permits. I deeply love that Providence which disposes all things so well and exempts us from anxieties about events in this world. One day we shall know all; one day I shall know why we are separated, we two who would fain be together. Let us draw closer, my friend, let us draw closer in heart and thought, by writing to each other. This communion is very sweet, these confidences bring relief, even purify the soul as running water carries off its sediment.

As for me, I feel better after I have let myself flow here. I say here, because I leave in it my inmost thoughts without looking, sometimes even without knowing, what they are. What goes on within me is at certain times unknown to me; ignorance, no doubt of human existence. I have seen so little, known so little, of good as of evil! Yet I am not a child. I like very much to write to Louise, but that is not the same as to you; besides my letters are seen and the heart is not a book that one would wish to open to the public. Thanks then for liking my correspondence, for giving me the innocent and quite fraternal pleasure of telling you that I love you with that warm, tender and pure affection that has its source in charity. For this is to love well; thus Christ loved us and wishes us to love our brethren.

June 9th, 1837.—A day spent in putting out a washing to dry leaves little to tell. Yet there is something pretty in spreading white linen on the grass, or seeing it fluttering on ropes. One is, if one likes, the *Nasicaa* of Homer, or one of the princesses of the Bible who washed their brother's tunics. We have a washing-house, which you have never seen at La Moulinasse, fairly large and full of water, which beautifies that hollow and attracts the birds which love the freshness for their singing.

Our Le Cayla is much changed, and changes every day. You will no more see the white dove-cot at the side, nor the little door on the terrace, nor the corridor and the window where we used to measure our height when we were little. All that has vanished and given place to great windows and great rooms. These new things are prettier, but why is it that I regret the old ones and replace in my heart the gates that are taken away and the stones that are fallen? My very feet do not grow used to these new steps, but go on their old way and make slips at places where they never passed when they were little. Which will be the first coffin that will go forth from these new gates? Be they new or old, all have their size for that, just as every nest has its opening. That is what destroys the charm of this abode of a day, and makes the eyes rise to that home which is not built by the hand of man.

A letter has come from Marie. I record a letter always as the arrival of a friend. Marie's are neatly written, overflowing with news, with the trifles of society. To-day she announces the arrival of M. Vialar, the African, and that of an Arab prince,

curiosities for the country and for those who can see things through men. What pictures does not an African bring before our eyes at Gaillac, or an inhabitant of Gaillac in Africa? Providence, which directs all things, surely cannot have brought these two men together for no purpose, and taken the Arab from his desert to show him our France, our civilisation, our arts, our ways, our beautiful cathedrals.

June 10th, 1837.—A letter written to Louise, my prayers, household duties, that is my day. As I was lifting a kettle off the fire, Father said he did not like to see me doing those things; but I thought on Saint Bonaventura, who was washing the dishes of his monastery when they came bringing the cardinal's hat, I think. In this world there is nothing base but sin which degrades us in the eyes of God. So my kettle gave rise to a salutary reflection which will serve to make me perform without disgust, certain distasteful duties, such as soiling my hands in the kitchen. Good-night; to-morrow morning I am going to confession. The north wind has been blowing all day, our labourers were shivering in the fields. Should we see winter in the month of May!

Since yesterday I have had no time to settle down to writing. It is a privation for me not to touch my pen, as for a musician not to touch his instrument. My pen is my lyre; I love it like a friend, nothing can break me from it. Between us there is a kind of loadstone.

Aux flots revient le navire,
La Colombe à ses amours ;
A toi je reviens, ma lyre,
A toi je reviens toujours.

Dieu, de qui tu viens, sans doute,
Te fit la voix de mon cœur,
Et je lui chante, en ma route,
Come l'oiseau voyageur.

Je compose mon cantique ;
Des simples chants des hameaux :
Je recueille la musique
Qu'en passant font les ruisseaux ;

J'écoute le bruit qui tombe
Avec le jour dans les bois,
Les soupirs de la colombe
Et le tonnerre aux cent voix.

J'écoute quant il s'éveille
Ce qu'au berceau dit l'enfant,
Ce qu'aux roses dit l'abeille,
Ce qu'aux forêts dit le vent.

J'écoute dans les églises
Ce que l'orgue chante à Dieu,
Quand les vierges sont assises,
A la table du saint lieu.

Ames du ciel amoureuses,
J'écoute aussi vos désirs,
Et prends des hymnes pieuses
Dans chacun de vos soupirs.

The poetry would go at a great rate if I let it; but to-morrow is Whitsunday, a great festival which disposes us to meditation, and makes the soul silent in order to pray and beg for the holy spirit, the spirit of love and understanding, whence comes the knowledge and love of God. So I am going into my cenaculum, my little room; nothing more from the outside world, if that is possible. But I think of you, poor wanderer in the world. If you knew how much I should like to have you with us! May it please God to bring you one day, and restore you to the society of your brother and sisters.

June 13th, 1837.—I came back to my diary the Monday after Pentecost, without mentioning anything about yesterday, so great, so divine. Let us talk a little about the present, the time I spend teaching Miou, my pupil, to read. She has my ear but my heart is here. Yet my chain of thoughts is often broken in order to correct her. This child has a slow and dull mind, so that one must constantly be at hand to rouse her. Patience and perseverance; with that we shall make something of Miou, not an accomplished mind, but a Christian understanding which knows why God has sent it into the world. Poor child! until lately she did not in the least know why. How ignorant we are, how immature, all of us! A Lamennais at the age of ten would not have known it any more than Miou, if he had not been taught. Such is my view; our mind develops only by instruction, as wood kindles only at the touch of fire.

I have a certain fondness for teaching little children, for hearing them repeat their catechism. It is a pleasure and even a duty to teach these poor Christians. One can do the work of a missionary at all times in our country districts, and I doubt if savages have less real knowledge of religion than some of our peasants. Our cook, Marianne, saw the word *cochons* in the commandments. Another believes that salvation¹ consists in greeting one another, and a thousand other pitiful pieces of stupidity. But God is kind, and it is not mere ignorance he will punish. There is more reason to fear for the clever men who go astray, for those who know the law and are unwilling to follow it, for the blind who shut their eyes to the light. Oh! what compassion I feel for those! how much they are to be pitied! Their fate is to be seen in the parable of the vine and the barren tree. I would write it, but you know it already.

A trouble: Trilby is ill, so ill that the poor creature will die. I love her, my dear little dog. I remember that you also used to love her and caress her, calling her *rogue*. Many memories cling to Trilby, and make me regret her loss. Our great affections and our small, all leave us and die in their turn. Our heart is like a tree surrounded with dead leaves.

The parson comes to see us. I have not told you much about him. He is a good, simple man, speaking better of God than of the world, of which

¹ *Salut* in French means either *salvation* or a *greeting*.

he knows little. So he does not shine in company ; his conversation is commonplace and gives a poor opinion of his mind to those who do not know a priest's mind. He does good in the parish ; his gentleness wins souls. He is our father at present. To me he seems young after M. Bories. He lacks that strong and firm tone that sustained me ; but God has taken him from me, and He knows why. Let us submit and walk like a child, without looking at the hand that leads us. After all I do not complain ; he speaks well, very well for souls at peace. Never had Andillac an eloquence so sweet, he is the Massillon of the country. But God alone can allay the troubles of the soul. If you had become a priest, you would know that, and I would ask counsel of you ; but I can say nothing to Maurice. Ah ! poor friend, how I regret it ! how I long to pass from confidence of the heart to confidence of the soul ! In such laying bare of the soul there is such spiritual sweetness. The mother of St Francis de Sales confessed to her son ; sisters have confessed to their brothers. It is beautiful to see nature thus losing itself in grace.

A young pigeon has just been brought to me which I wish to keep and tame and pet ; it will replace Trilby. This poor heart always wants something to love ; when one thing is wanting, it takes another. I notice, moreover, that we go on loving ceaselessly, which points to eternal love as our end. Nothing enables me. . . . Father has come to cut short my words. Once more I begin. Nothing enables me to understand Heaven better, than to picture it as the abode of love ; for here

every moment's love brings us happiness ; what will it be to love without end ?

June 16th, 1837.—I have made a discovery. In turning over the pages of an old book of devotion, *The Guiding Angel*, I found the litanies of Providence which Rousseau is said to have loved so much, and those of The Infant Jesus, simple and sublime like that divine childhood. This is a passage I noticed : “ Child who weepest in the cradle, Child who thunderest from on high, Child who hast redeemed the world, Child who art the chief among the angels,” and a thousand other graceful names and invocations. If ever I carry out a plan which I have in my mind, these litanies will be placed before children. My pigeon alights on me and cooes so tenderly for me to put him in his nest, that I must leave you.

June 17th, 1837.—A beautiful sunrise promised a beautiful day, a rare thing in this May. Never a colder, bleaker, sadder spring. That spoils everything : neither the chickens nor the flowers come out, nor yet bright thoughts.

Early to-day I went to Vieux to visit the relics of the saints, and particularly of St. Eugène, my patron. You know that the holy bishop was exiled from Carthage to Gaul, by an Arian prince. He came to Alby, thence to Vieux, where he built a monastery where many saints gathered. To-day it is the Mill of Latour, I would that those who come there knew the pious veneration that is due to the place ; but the greater number know nothing of it. They do not even know why processions

take place to Vieux from all parishes of the district. I explained it to Miou, who was with me, and who understands perhaps at present what relics are, and what is done before these shrines where they are exposed.

I love these pilgrimages, remnants of ancient faith, but the time for such things is past, the spirit of them is dead among most people. They used to go to Vieux for prayer, now they go merely to take a walk. Yet if M. le Curé does not hold that procession, it will bring hail. Credulity abounds where faith disappears. We have, nevertheless, some good souls well worthy of pleasing the saints, Rose Drouille, for example, Madame Durelle who has the gift of meditation, who has learned so much about the rosary, then Françon de Gaillard and his daughter Jacqueline, so earnest at the church.

This saintly escort did not accompany me; I was alone with my good angel and Miou. Having heard Mass, and finished my prayers, I set off with a new hope. I had come to beg something from St Eugène. The saints are our brothers. If you were all-powerful, would you not grant me what I asked? That is what I thought whilst invoking St Eugène, who, besides, is my patron. We have so little in this world, at least let us have hope for the next.

June 20th, 1837.—Three letters have come: one from Euphrasie, one from Antoinette, and one from Félicité, very mournful. And you are ill, poor Maurice, that is why you do not write. Heavens!

how I long to be beside you, to see you, to touch you, to care for you ! You are well cared for, no doubt, but you need a sister. I know it, I feel it. If ever I have wished to see you, it is this moment. Must it always be misfortune that brings you ! sometimes revolution, sometimes cholera, at present your illness. Would the pleasure of seeing us be very sweet ? It is not God's will that there should be perfect happiness in this world. These last few days I have been thinking : if Maurice were to come in the holidays, what joy ! how happy Father would be ! And now here is all this happiness gone through illness. But do come ; the air of Le Cayla, the ass's milk, the rest would cure you. I am sorry for not having answered you ; I have perhaps caused some sad thought, some doubt that has done you harm. Perhaps you thought that I did not wish to write to you any more, that I no longer wished your friendship. I was writing to you in this book every day, but I did not want to give you time to desire a letter ; that delay would have made you reply sooner another time. Now let us leave all that, and speak no more of the past. We are going to see each other, hear each other, and make everything plain.

June 22nd, 1837.—No writing to-day. Sunday is spent at church or on the roads. In the evening I am tired ; the most I could do was to read a little of the *History of the Church* after supper, but I thought much about you, all the same, Heaven knows. I have asked Rose to pray for you. She has promised to do it, which gave me

great pleasure ; I have been calmer since, because I believe that prayer is all-powerful. I know a proof of that in a little child cured suddenly of complete blindness. The story is a pretty one, I must tell you it. At Ouillas, in a convent among the mountains, there was a young girl boarder, so pious, so sweet, so innocent, that everybody loved her and looked up to her as an angel. It is said that her confessor, M. Chabbert, whom we had for Curé, thought her so pure that he gave her her first communion without absolution. She died at the age of thirteen, so respected and loved by her companions, that one after another they go each day to visit her grave, all white with lilies in the flower season, and ask from her what they need ; more than once the saint has listened to their prayer. Two years ago the gathering was taking place at the cemetery, when a poor woman, coming with her little blind boy, to gather wood near by, remembered the marvels related of Marie, and the thought came to her that she should take her child to the grave and ask for his cure. Here was her prayer.

“Little Saint Marie, thou whom I have seen so good and so compassionate, hear me now from Paradise where thou art ; restore to my son his sight ; may God grant this mercy through thee !”

Hardly were the words spoken when the poor mother, still on her knees, heard her child cry out that he could see. “Hullo ! mother, I see you !”

The scales that blinded him fell from his eyes. The same sore had covered his head, leaving not

a hair to be seen, and eight days after the poor mother showed everybody her child with beautiful eyes and pretty fair curls.

I heard that from Mlle. Carayon of Alby, who saw the blind child, and the child miraculously healed. It is a charming story, which I believe with all my heart, and it would make me wish to go to Ouillas to ask something also with all the warmth of my soul.

I was expecting to hear from you this morning. Félicité told us that you were to write at the same time as she, but no letter; this delay makes us uneasy. Who knows? perhaps you are worse. The weather is not good for you. Always cold or rain. I shall be longing for the fine weather, for the spring to appear, for the air to grow mild. Since yesterday I have made many prophecies about the weather. It is this severe winter, this cold and unwholesome air that have hurt you.

I have given my pupil a good scolding, for she is often lacking in respect towards her mother. To make an impression on her, I quoted the story of the ten children cursed by their mother, whom St Augustine had seen at Hippona, in a terrible state of quaking. Miou seemed affected; perhaps she will be more obedient when she is tempted to say *no* to her mother. I remember how these children laid under a curse terrified me. Disobedience was the first vice of man, it is the first fault of the child; he finds a wicked pleasure in all that is forbidden him. We all bear this resemblance to our first parent. The infant Jesus was the only one of whom it could be said that

he was submissive and obedient. That would be a beautiful model to set before childhood, that divine childhood with its virtues, its graces, its features displayed by some pious Raphael. I have often thought that and formed my group of saintly children of the Old and the New Testament : Joseph, Samuel, John the Baptist, who was led into the wilderness for three years ; Cyril, who died a martyr at the age of five ; the brother of St Theresa, who built little oratories for his sister ; the virgin Eulalia. No, she is too big at twelve among these childish forms ; but I should find some other little saint to put in the picture. All that strewn with flowers, with birds, with pearls, would make a pretty little picture of childhood. I have an idea that I might make a book of it, as I have said to you long ago. I know not why I cannot get rid of that idea ; on the contrary it occurs oftener than ever.

June 27th, 1837.—Nothing written here for several days ; but I have written much elsewhere, for I feel the need to open my heart somewhere ; I have done that with Louise and before God : to console oneself there is nothing better than faith for the soul, friendship for the heart. You know what saddens me ; it is the thought that you have been ill, that you are ill even yet. Who knows ? a hundred leagues away ! Ah ! what suffering the separation causes ! I cannot even learn where you are, and I am anxious to know all. The sorrowful heart is filled with longing and suffering.

Here is my day : mass in the morning, wrote to Louise, read a little, and then to my little room.

Oh ! I do not tell all that I do there. I have some flowers in a bowl ; I have been looking at two of them for a long time, the one leaning over the other which opened out its petals to it. It was delightful to look at them and to picture to oneself the eager friendship in these two little flowerets. They are stitchworts, little white flowers with a long stem, one of the most graceful in our fields. They are found along the hedges, among the grass. There are some on the road to the mill, in the shelter of a little mound all sprinkled with their little white heads. It is my favourite flower. I have placed some before our image of the Virgin. I should like them to be there when you come, and let you see the two flowers who are friends. A sweet fancy that has a double charm when I think that a sister is the underneath flower. I do not believe my friend that you will say no. Dear Maurice, we are to see each other and hear each other's voices ! These five years of absence we shall make up for every instant in our talks and stories.

June 29th, 1837.—For two days I have told you nothing, dear Maurice ; I have not been able to put down here any of the ideas, events, fears, hopes, sorrows or joys that have been my lot. What a book all that would make ! Two days of life are long and full sometimes, and even all are, if one dwells upon everything that occurs. Life is like a road bordered with flowers, trees, bushes, grass, and a thousand objects that would for ever hold the gaze of the traveller ; but he passes on. Oh !

yes, let us pass on without lingering too long over what we see on earth, where all withers and dies. Let us look upwards, fix our eyes on the sky, the stars; let us pass thence to the Heaven that abides for ever. The contemplation of nature leads us thither; from sensible objects, the soul ascends to the regions of faith, and looks down upon creation, and then the world seems quite different.

How small the earth is to him who sees it from Heaven! said Deville, quoting unconsciously the words of the saints, for the saints and the poets agree sometimes. Nothing is more true than this smallness of the earth, seen thus by the eye of the soul, which can place itself in the proper point of view. Such is the judgment of Bossuet about the 'nothingness of grandeur; thus the saints have trampled under foot all that dazzled the eyes of other men, fortune, pleasure, glory, and their singular wisdom has caused them to be treated as fools.

(No date).—At last a letter from you! You are better, almost cured, you are coming. I am pleased and happy; I thank God a hundred times for this good news, and I take up my writing again, which I left off at this point several days ago. I was unwell and am so still, but it is only a remnant, a feeling of discomfort that will pass away; I do not even know what it is, nor what is wrong with me: it is not head nor stomach, nor chest, nothing about the body; so it is the soul, poor weak soul!

June, 1837.—Two visits, two people whom I

love, and who will delight us as long as they choose to remain. One cannot say as much about all visitors: but Élixa F. . . . is good and clever; her cousin A. . . . is sweet and, without being a beauty, pleases me by her youthful charm. My room is given up to them, and so I shall not come here so often. Still, from time to time I make my escape and come here, as at present, to write, to read, or to pray, these things which help me. At times the soul needs to be in solitude, to meditate far from all noise. That is what I come here for. I have written to Félicité, answered Gabrielle's letter, in which she enquired eagerly after you as soon as she knew you were ill. These marks of friendship touch my heart and make me thank God for being loved. Friendship is such a sweet thing! It enters into our joys and softens affliction. Marie de Thézac has also shown the same interest. You have friends, at any rate.

V.

January 26th, 1838.—I return for the first time to this little room where you were still this morning. How sad is the room of an absent one! We see him everywhere, yet find him nowhere. There are your shoes, the table all arranged, the mirror hung on the nail, the books you were reading last night before falling asleep, and I who kissed you, touched you, saw you. What is this world where all things pass away? Maurice, my dear Maurice, oh! how much I need you and God. So when I left you I went straight to the church where one can pray and weep undisturbed. How do you do, you who do not pray, when you are sad, when your heart is sore? As for myself I feel I need some more than human consolation, that God must befriend us when we suffer through those we love.

What has happened to-day that I can write about? Nothing but your departure, I have seen only you departing, that cross where we parted. Even if the King had come, I should be quite indifferent; but I have only seen Jeannot bringing back your horses. I was at the window, and I drew back; I seemed to see the return of a funeral procession.

It is evening, the end of a very sad, very long day. Good-night ; you can almost hear me still, you are not too far off ; but to-morrow, next day, always farther, farther !

January 27th, 1838.—Where are you this morning ? Having just called upon you, I am going away, as though to seek you here and there, where we were together.

I have done nothing but sew and iron ; read little except the good St Francis de Sales, the chapter on friendships. It was the one that suited me ; the heart always seeks its pasture. For my part I would live by loving ; whether father, brothers, sister, I need something.

What is to be said when the pastor does not preach on Sunday ? These words are the manna of our desert, which falls sweet and white, with a pure and simple taste that I love. I came back fasting from Andillac, but I read Bossuet, these beautiful sermons all marked by your hand. I have often left these pages with my mark on the top. Thus we met everywhere like the two eyes ; what is beautiful to you is beautiful to me. In each of our souls God has made a part very much alike.

January 28th, 1838.—By this time you have doubtless started from Toulouse ; you are rolling on your way, receding into the distance. At any rate I hope you will not cough on the road, that it will not be cold, that no accidents will happen !! “ What will befall him, O Lord ! I know not ; all I know is that nothing will befall him that Thou

hast not ordained, and foreseen from all eternity. that is enough for me, Lord, that is enough for me. Thy eternal and impenetrable schemes I adore, I bow to them with all my heart, for love of Thee. I submit to all, I accept all, to Thee I sacrifice all, and I join this sacrifice to that of Christ my Saviour. In His name I beg Thee to teach me perfect submission to all that may happen by Thy will or sufferance. May the will of God, just, lofty and kind in the highest degree, be accomplished in all things." That is the prayer of Madame Elizabeth, in the tower of the Temple, often repeated by me in my room.

I am going to write to our cousins Saint-Hilaire, then we shall go to Cahuzac, with Mimi, to see Françon, who is very ill.

January 29th, 1838.—Thunder, hail, autumn in the morning, summer weather at present, the sun is warm and oppressive. What a change in the sky and in all things! Everything was frozen a fortnight ago, and you were here: it is not the cold that I regret. Oh! the whistling north wind delighted me! I blessed it each time I went along to the hall, shivering. Still you had to go, I consented in view of what awaited you at Paris; we must learn to part in this world. Why can I not know where you are, what point you have reached, what road you are taking, so that I might join you, embrace you! Why is my arm not long enough to reach those I love! I can conceive that God, who is love, is everywhere.

The pastor has come to see us; his visit gladdened

me ; I like his gossip, which reaches no further than his parish, and is not tiring to follow, even when the spirit is depressed. I know not what I have scrawled, my thoughts are cramped, uneasy, as if caught in a trap, as if struggling fantastically in my head. Shall I let them go on? No, I am going off after a tender good-night.

January 31st, 1838.—I have noticed in myself an odd affection. Stupid heart that becomes attached to all things! Shall I tell you? I love the three leeches on the mantel-shelf. I would neither give them away or see them die ; I change the water every day, with great care lest any should fall out. When I do not see them all, I take the jar and look at what is going on inside, with other clear marks of affection, and all that because these leeches were brought for Charles, because Charles came with Caroline, and Caroline came for you. Curious links which make me laugh at the way the heart forms ties. *How many things!* It is pleasant to think of *them* and to see you among the leeches. Still impossible to separate you ; these creatures indicate the weather for me, cold or warm, rain or sunshine, and I constantly consult them now that you are gone. Fortunately the jar has always indicated fine. We say a thousand times : “ Maurice will have arrived without cold, without rain.” That is how we think of you, my friend, how everything turns our thoughts to you.

February 1st, 1838.—Dark, cloudy day, dull without and within. I feel duller than usual, and

as I do not wish to be dull, I have taken up my sewing to kill that state with stitches of the needle; but the ugly serpent still moves, although I have cut off his head and tail, that is, cut away idleness and feeble thoughts. We lose heart by dwelling on these sad impressions, and that does us harm. Oh! if I only knew music! It is said to be so good, so soothing for the ills of the soul.

February 2nd, 1838.—Eight days now since you left, at this very hour. I am going along the road where we parted. It is Candlemas, and I am going to mass with my candle.

We come from Andillac with a letter from Félicité; there was one for you from Caroline, which I sent back, slipping in a word for my dear sister. I can quite well call her so now that we have got so far; it is only anticipating by a few months, I hope. Yet, who knows? I have always a foreboding about this matter and about you, unskilful architect of happiness. I fear lest you should not carry it out, lest you should leave out the last link of the chain that would unite you for ever. *For ever*, I fancy, are terrible words for you, untrammelled eagle, rover that you are. How are you to be kept in your eyry?

This subject is not the only one. God knows what points I find in your character, points which offend me and grieve me. If from the heart we pass on to the soul, oh! it is there, it is there! But what avails it to speak and watch and complain? I do not feel myself holy enough to convert you, nor strong enough to

influence you. God alone can do that. That is my earnest prayer to Him, for my happiness is bound up in it. Perhaps you cannot concieve it, you, with your philosophic eye, do not see the tears of a Christian who weeps over a soul that goes astray, a soul so dearly loved, a brother's soul, the sister of one's own. All that makes me lament like Jeremiah.

Now the day is ending in snow. I am glad to know that you have arrived, now that the cold is coming back ; provided you are none the worse of your excursions, that your chest keeps well, and M. d'A. . . . does not make you sit up too late in telling you his troubles. A thousand cares come to sadden me, a thousand thoughts come to me and fall like snowflakes upon Paris.

Among some scraps of paper I have found my first poem, I put it here. Here I put everything I come across, everything I would show you if you were here. It seems to me impossible that you are no longer here ; I tell myself that you are coming back, and yet you are very far off, and your shoes, these two empty feet that you have in your room, do not stir. I look at them, I love them almost as much as that little pink shoe that you were reading to me about in Hugo the other day. The heart thrusts itself into everything, into a shoe, into a jar ; one would say it is very stupid. Is it not ?

February 3rd, 1838.—I began my day by embellishing a distaff, very round, very full, very smart with its knot of ribbon. Now I am going

to spin with a little spindle. Work and amusements need to be varied; tired of the stocking, I take up my needle, then the distaff, then a book. So time passes away and carries us off on his crupper.

Eran has just arrived. I was longing to see him, to know what day you started from Gaillac. So it was Friday, the same day that you started from here. It was also on a Friday you started for Brittany. That is not a lucky day, mother died on a Friday, and there have been other sad events that I have noticed. I know not whether we are to believe in this fatality in days.

February 4th, 1838.—Sunday is often one of the lucky days. Some letters on coming from mass, one of yours from Bordeaux, news from you at last, your own handwriting. When shall I have some more from Paris? How ambitious the heart is! This morning transported with what I have, now it is not enough. I have sent you on a letter from M. . . ., very sorry that I had not time to slip in a word for you. That word is here, you will find it later on. Who knows when this little book will reach you? Whether you will see it or myself first? I should like it to be myself.

I leave you with one regret, a secret that I cannot tell you because it is not mine. Perhaps I shall be able to speak of it some day. That would occupy an important place on this paper, my confidant, if it were not already written in my heart under seal of secrecy.

February 5th, 1838.—I have no time to write.

February 6th, 1838.—Written much, but far from this, not for this book. It is a pity, for I should have filled many pages with what comes from my heart to-day. You like that. Augustine has come to spend the day, having nobody at the parsonage. That child, who usually amuses me, has not amused me to-day, and must have thought my brow stern and my manner preoccupied. I took my distaff for distraction's sake; but as I spun, my mind too was spinning and winding and gaily turning its spindle. I was not at my distaff, the soul sets the bodily machine in motion then goes off. Where does it go? Where was mine to-day? God knows, and you also a little; you are aware that my thoughts rarely leave you, even when I am reading the beautiful sermons you have given me. I see many things in them full of significance for you. Oh! you ought to go on reading them.

February 7th, 1838.—Mighty blasts of wind, a great orchestra at my window. I rather like that harmony that comes from all the ill-joined panes, from the half-closed shutters, from all the holes in the walls, with varied notes so fantastically shrill that they pierce the dumbest ears. Odd music of Le Cayla, I have said, music that I love because I have no other. One who never hears anything else, listens to the noise whatever it be.

A visit, a friend, M. Limer. Almost on entering he asked, "How is M. Maurice? Have you heard from him?" "To-morrow, no doubt, to-morrow." These questions give me pleasure because they come from the heart. These worthy priests love us;

we have no better friends in the country. Good-night; I must go and look after the supper, and make the beds ready. To-night Eran is to occupy your little room. To-morrow morning I shall come to see if it is you, I shall listen for your cry 'Come in.' Alas! alas! how things pass away and memories remain!

February 8th, 1838.—Oh! letters, letters from Paris, one from you. You have arrived sound and happy and welcome! God be thanked! My heart is full of that, I say to everybody, "Maurice has written, he has arrived safe, had good weather," and a hundred other things that come into my mind.

The beautiful weather, the mild air, the pure sky, nothing is wanting but the leaves to make us fancy it is the month of May. This smiling nature melts the soul, prepares it for some blessing. "Impossible," I thought, as I took my morning walk, "that something agreeable should not happen," and I got your letter. I was not mistaken.

These letters, this writing, how they delight me! How the heart casts itself upon them and feeds on them! But afterwards the sadness returns, the joy subsides, regret arises and makes me feel that a letter is not much to take the place of the loved one. We are never content, all our joys are mutilated. It is God's will, it is His will also that the beautiful side which is wanting should be found only in Heaven. That ought to excite a little longing in certain souls, and make them live the lives of Christians.

Wrote to Louise and to Marie.

February 9th, 1838.—Anniversary of the death of our grandfather. We have been to mass; on coming back I wrote to you, I write still, I would write always and everywhere, on the bricks of your room, on the soles of your shoes, how do I know where thought will alight? But I bring it here like a bird on a branch, and it sings. What shall I say?—the first thing that comes: that on this day, in years past there was joy and mourning at Le Cayla, death and baptism, death of our grandfather and birth of a grandson. Erembert came into the world then. It is sad to be born near a tomb, but thus it is with us all: life and death are neighbours. So say Shakespeare's grave-diggers in some passage, I know not which.

I have scarcely read your author, though I think him grand, like M. Hugo; but these geniuses have ugly features that shock the eye of a woman. I detest meeting what I do not wish to see, which makes me shut many books; *Notre-Dame de Paris*, which I have at hand a hundred times a day, that style, that Esmeralda, her doe, so many pretty things tempt me, and say, "Read, see." I look, I turn over the pages, but stains here and there on the pages stop me; no more reading, and I content myself with looking at the pictures. I still like them as much as when I was a child; I am on the point of tearing out that *of the cake with the leaven of maize*, of that woman and child, both so pretty. We have admired it together, which makes it please me all the more.

But I am far away from our grandfather and the serious thoughts which were commencing on birth and death. Let us return to them, I love that also, and I have open before me that very passage of Bossuet on the subject: "Indeed does there not seem a certain relation between the swaddling-clothes and the shroud? Those that are born and those that die are wrapped up almost in the same way; a cradle suggests a sepulchre, and it is as a mark of our mortality that we are entombed upon being born."

February 10th, 1838.—I return to where I was yesterday, speaking of death, life and Bossuet, these three great things. Jean Roux's child is being borne at this moment to the cemetery. We have heard the bell which sets the poor mother weeping, and conjures up in me thoughts that are half sweet, half sombre. These dead children are said to be happy, to be in Heaven; but we think of the grown-up people, those human souls which appear before God with so many days to reckon, and what days! When their life is laid open, that journal that God keeps, as Bossuet says, and we see But I stroke that out, it is not for me to sit in judgment on souls; that office belongs to God alone. May they all find salvation, in Heaven may none be wanting of those I love; that takes up a good deal of my thoughts and changes my questionings into prayers.

A letter from Marie, another from Hippolyte in truly laconic style: "Come on such and such a day, I shall be delighted to see you." This is not

meant for me, as you may suppose, but is addressed to Eran, asking him to a breakfast and a ball. Everything is a-stir at present ; pleasure has sounded the call, and few fail to present themselves. Here we only listen, chat, spin, read, and write to our friends ; such is life at Le Cayla, so peaceful, the life which I love and would regret if I had to leave it. I am attached to it like a bird to its cage. My gold-finch always comes back when I let him out, for he could not fly far. It is the same with me ; my wings would not carry me far in this world ; a corner of the world where you were with Caroline, your wife, that is all. That is my Paris, my world.

February 11th, 1838.—A letter from Louise, my dear friend, who writes on leaving to be married, a letter prettier than all the bride's jewels.

February 12th, 1838.—Father has gone to *** ; the pastor came ; there has been snow, sunshine, all the changes of the sky, and little to tell. I am not in a mood for writing or for making myself agreeable : quite the contrary. There are such days when the soul curls itself up like a hedgehog. If you were close by, alas ! how I should prick you. And would to Heaven that it were so ! I should not then be thinking that perhaps you are feeling ill in that Paris air.

February 13th, 1838.—I have come back from Andillac with a lovely big apple that Toinon d'Aurel gave me, out of gratitude for my having gone to

see her son who is ill. No one is more grateful than a mother, and a poor mother. Our leeches have been useful for that poor child. What better use could they have been put to after having served as thermometer during your journey? I am much less attached to them at present. So my affections are often interested, rising and falling according to the day. Here is Father come back from *** ill, as happens every time he goes there. There are some places which are not good for one. I always fear that Paris is not good for you. At any rate if Father is unwell we have him here to look after. Perhaps such a fear is groundless. Who knows? Uncertainty soon makes itself master of the heart.

February 14th, 1838.—Father is better; he has had fever, and has slept little. We have given up our room to him, for it is warmer, and I have taken your bed. It is long since I slept there; not since I cut out of the tapestry the hand of the man who was going to plunder the nest embroidered on it. At least I attributed this wicked intention to him and it made me cross every time I woke up. So I punished it by an act of rigour, for which I was punished in my turn. They scolded me for tearing the poor man, without hearing how wicked he was. Who saw it except myself? To deal properly with children, we ought to borrow their eyes and their hearts, see and feel as they can do, and judge them accordingly. Many tears would be spared, tears which are shed for mistaken lessons. Poor little children, how I

suffer when I see them miserable, tormented and thwarted ! Do you remember the *Paternoster* I repeated in my heart, so that Father would not scold you at your lessons ? The same compassion remains with me still, with this difference, that I pray God to make the parents reasonable.

If I had a child to bring up, how tenderly and gladly I should do it, with all the care that is given to a delicate little flower ! Then with words of love I should speak to them of God ; I should tell them that He gives me all that I give them, and the air, the sunshine, and the flowers as well ; that He has made the sky and so many beautiful stars. I remember how these stars gave me a beautiful idea of God, how I used to rise after I had been put to bed, to gaze at them from the little window at the foot of my bed, when I stayed with my cousins at Gaillac. I was found out, and I saw the beautiful luminaries no more. The window was nailed up, for I used to open the window and lean over, at the risk of falling into the street. That proves that children possess a sense of the beautiful, and through the works of God it is easy to inspire them with faith and love.

Just now I shall tell you that on opening the window this morning I heard a blackbird singing at the top of its voice away above Golse. That spring-song among the crows is delightful, like a rose in the snow. Mimi is at the village, father in his room, Eran at Gaillac, and I with you.

February 15th, 1838.—Another invitation to a ball. Poor dancers, where do they send their

invitations? They might as well knock at a convent door as at Le Cayla. But I was wrong, they have Eran, who dances, chatters, plays, behaves with grace and amiability, and has the reputation of being charming. Indeed he gets along well with men and women; he is quite a man of the world. Alas! there are so many like him!

I have read a few pages, written a little, thought much and made a lovely spindleful of yarn.

February 16th, 1838.—Blank: that is better than what I would put down. Is it worth telling you that I have not been well to-day, that I went for a walk with Mimi in the woods and fields to see if that would do me good? We came upon a lark, who fled, singing as he went, and I rather envied him his wings and his gladness.

February 17th, 1838.—A letter from Caroline. What happiness to know that you are so much loved, so well cared for, only crossing the street to find yourself in your own room! No more colds, no more anxiety, no more of these dragons I used to see at your heels in Paris. Thank God! I am at peace. In all this I see the plans of Providence which arranges everything for your good. And yet you do not love God! His care for you shines in my eyes like diamonds. See, my friend, all that comes to alleviate your unhappy position, this unexpected help, this family affection, this mother, this sister who is more than a sister, so loving, so sweet, so pretty, who promises you such happiness! Do you not see something in that, some divine hand that

guides your life? Now I hope you will have a future better than the past, that past that has cost us so much suffering! But we all have our time of tribulation, bad fortune, Egyptian bondage, before the manna and the pleasant life.

Romiguières came to spend the evening, to warm himself at our fire and to speak of asses and sheep, and, what amused me most, to show his papers that we might know his age; he had made a mistake of seven years. Happy man, unconscious of his own life! These peasants' lives pass away like brooks, ignorant of how long they have flowed. They have their eras, but they do not reckon as we do. They say to you: "I was born when this field was in corn, I was married when this tree was planted, when this house was being built;" noble and beautiful registers. Bernardin, I believe, makes Virginia speak like this; as for me, I have heard that a hundred times at Andillac or here. Simple nature is everywhere the same.

February 18th, 1838.—I brought back from Andillac a letter of mourning and one about a marriage, that of Mlle de Saint Géry to M. de Mortière. Tears and rejoicings, things we meet with almost every day in this life, made up, as it is, of perpetual contrasts.

February 19th, 1838.—Waited until evening to see if I should have anything to say. Nothing. Do you like that? If you preferred words, I should find plenty in my heart though none came from without. A woman's heart is talkative and needs

little to make it talk ; by itself it can expand infinitely and turn eloquent, from that little bosom where it is placed, as from the tribune of a senate. My friend, how many times I have harangued you thus ! But when I think it is neither pleasant nor useful to you, I say nothing. I take my distaff, and instead of the woman of the XVII. century, I am the simple rustic girl, and that delights me, diverts me, and relaxes the soul. There is a side of my character which has much in common with the simplest classes of people, and finds infinite pleasure among them. So I have never dreamt of grandeur or fortune, but how many times have I dreamt of a little house away from towns, spotlessly clean with its shining dishes and its wooden furniture, its trellis at the gate and some hens ! And I there with I know not whom, for I should not care for a peasant such as ours who are so uncouth and beat their wives. Do you remember. . . . ?

VI.

February 19th, 1838, continued.—Here is a new book. What shall I put in it, what shall I say, or think, or see before I come to the end? Will there be good fortune or bad? Will there be . . . ? But what does it matter! I shall take what comes, as does the brook down there. These gropings into the future only serve to torment us, for usually we see there more sorrows than joys. Sickness, death, affliction, I know not what phantoms we meet in that obscurity.

Yesterday I thought it possible that Father had a fit, because he complained of a numb feeling in the right side; his father died of that almost at the same age. Poor Father! What would I do without him in this world? I have never felt that I lived in this world for any other reason than his happiness. Heaven knows that, and to him I have consecrated my life. Never have I had the least idea of leaving him, except to go into a convent. Even that thought I have abandoned, so much do I feel the impossibility of tearing myself away from here, of leaving even to go with you. Paris has almost no attraction for me, I assure you. I would not go two steps from his side, if you would come home, to be beside us, to live with

us. Impossible happiness. At present sorrow and bitterness : that is the consequence of having dipped into the future ! It would have been better to take up the thread of my other book, and continue my tale like Scheherazade.

I was asking you then if you remembered that man we met on the road to Gaillac, who, entering his house like a thunderbolt, almost gave me a fright, and how we spoke much about conjugal happiness and unhappiness. Then when we happened to mention your marriage, many tender thoughts suggested themselves. I said that God had made Caroline for you, as Eve for Adam, and you asked me to pray that God would also give you an angel of a little daughter. As soon as you are married, I shall not fail to do it. Night summons me away.

February 24th, 1838. — A day which begins with rain and the cawing of rooks. Let us see what will come next from now till evening. I have not written for a few days on account of some visits we have had, something or other which has kept me from writing. It is not the heart that is silent.

How well I have done in waiting till to-night ! Would I have written anything prettier than what I see, what I possess, what I feel, than the pleasure your letter has given me, the second you have sent since your return to Paris ? Oh ! how full it is of happiness, and how delighted I am to know, in short, that you are just as I should like you to be ! You do not go out, you do not risk your health, you see no people ; in the midst of Babylon you might date your letters from the deepest solitude. Unhoped-for

prudence which delights me, makes me thank God, and gives me hope, consoles me, fills my heart with a mysterious joy on your account. Alas ! I am so often plunged in sadness and anxiety ! Oh ! brothers, brothers, we love you so much ! If you knew it, if you understood what your happiness costs us, with what sacrifices it is paid for ! Oh ! may they understand it, and not expose their precious health and precious souls so heedlessly !

More letters and parcels, a number of the *Propagation of Faith*, sent by our archbishop. This disordered heap comes out of an apron and covers all the round table.

Ten o'clock in the evening. — This day was destined for pretty things, for arrivals. The box, the long-expected box, is here. Cuffs, frill, comb, brush, pins, and perfumed powder pass from hand to hand. It was little Mariette de Thézac who brought that from Gaillac. Good-night, I am going to think much of you and Caro, I am going to sleep sound.

February 25th, 1838. — It is a month to-day, at this very hour, since your departure. That changes somewhat the rosy hue of last night's thoughts ; but adieu. I must think of everything but human things. It is Sunday, I am going off to church. We are all dining with the pastor ; he shall have your remembrances, and you shall have mine before God. That is where they are all good.

February 26th, 1838. — I have escaped for one minute, one minute with you, while they are waiting for me in the kitchen. I should prefer my little room,

but they are roasting ducks, preparing a "croustade," a little festive dinner which requires my aid. We are expecting the pastor ; if I could only expect some one else as well ! All who come turn my thoughts to you who come not. Let us draw near in spirit, let us write to each other, you from your cell in the world, I from my little room in solitude. Our lots in the world will be very different ; but with our hearts it will be otherwise, I hope. Paris and Le Cayla resemble each other less than our souls do, less than our thoughts, our beings. It is tiresome to have to leave you to go and make a croustade.

February 27th, 1838.-- It rains ; I watched the rain falling, and then took it into my head to let my thoughts fall the same way on this paper, drop by drop. That will brighten my sky which, like the other, is overcast, not with heavy clouds, but with something which veils the blue, the serenity. I would fain smile at all things, and I feel ready to weep ; yet I am not unhappy. Whence does this feeling arise ? Apparently because our soul grows weary on earth, poor exile ! . . . Here is Mimi at her prayers ; I am going to do the same, and tell God that I am weary. Ah me ! what would become of me without prayer, without faith, the thought of Heaven, without that womanly piety which changes into love, into divine love ? I was lost and without happiness on earth. You may believe me, I have not yet found happiness in anything human, not even in you.

February 28th, Ash Wednesday, 1838.—Here I am with ashes on my brow and serious thoughts. That

memento pulvis es is terrible; all this day these words have rung in my ears; I cannot keep away the thought of death, above all in this room where I no longer see you, where I saw you dying, where your presence and your absence evoke sad fancies.

Only one thing is gay, that is the little medallion of the Virgin hung at your bedside. She shines yet in the same place where I put her to keep watch over you. If you knew, my friend, how the sight of her gladdens me, the memories, the hopes, the deepest feelings of my heart that centre round that holy image! I shall keep it as a relic; and if ever you return to sleep in this little bed, you will still sleep beside the medallion of the Virgin. For my sake grant this confidence, this love, not to a piece of metal, but to the image of the Mother of God. I should like to know if in your new cell, there is Saint Theresa who used to hang in the other cell beside the font,

où toi, nécessaireux,
Défaillant, tu prenais l'aumône dans ce creux.
(Where *thou* amidst want and weakness,
In this hollow didst alms receive.)

You receive your alms there no longer, I fear, where do you receive them? Who can tell? Is the world where you dwell now rich enough for your wants? Maurice, if I could only convey to you one of my thoughts on that subject, if I could instil into you the faith and knowledge I gather from the devotional books, these beautiful reflections of the Gospel! If I could only see you a Christian, I would give my life and everything for that.

M. Fieuzet has been with us for three days and creates a little diversion in our somewhat monotonous conversations, for ever fields and sheep, unless some letters arrive ; and they do not come every day. This worthy curé amuses us, relates a thousand trifles about parishes, presbyteries and the Church, which, spiced with a dash of wit, are quite piquant. We laughed heartily at a curé of the neighbourhood who had the bell rung for a marriage party that was passing through his parish. We laughed at that party perched on a bullock - waggon, at the triumphal arch over the waggon, the motto on the arch. . . .

March 1st, 1838.— A moment ago I was watching two little beggars who were walking with great delight under the tall poplar. They never tired of raising their head and their eyes ; and I thought how everything high thus captivates our understanding, and that I should do the same under the pyramids of Egypt . . . when a tiny bird alighting on the top of the poplar made me feel the impotence of our poor nature, and cast down the pride of my thoughts.

Here is some provision for Lent, Massillon, which Élixa has just sent me. I shall read a sermon every day. That is for the soul, the mind will live in whatever way it can, I know not what to feed it on ; no books to my taste. Yet it wants something ; I cannot do without reading, providing for that which thinks and lives. I mean to cast myself upon serious matters, on *Indifference in the Matter of Religion*. That is the best of what I have

at hand ; then I am glad to read again what I read in my youth, what surprised me, stirred me, and enlightened me like a new Heaven. When the Abbé Gagne advised me to read these, I hardly knew anything else than the *Imitation* and some other books of devotion. You may judge the effect of this stimulating reading, how profoundly it opened up my understanding. From that moment I had a different idea of things ; it was like a revelation of the world, of God, of everything. That was a blessing, a surprise, like that of the chicken coming forth from its shell. And what charmed me most of all was that my faith, nourished on all these beauties, grew and strengthened.

March 14th, 1838.—A blank, a silence of twelve days. A journey to Gaillac, where I did not take my diary with me. I expected to return the same evening ; but Louise, whom I went to see, was at Saint Gély, and I waited for my dear friend, which kept me away longer than I wished. I do not like leaving here ; nothing pleases me like my desert ; to-day it is radiant with sunshine and tender light. I would not change it for the most magnificent city. I dislike a roof for horizon, or walking in streets when our roads are bordered with flowers. To-day it is a joy to be in the open air, to wander like the partridges. Father was able to go with us as far as the end of the long vine. We sat for a little in the wood, close to the place where Caroline fell. We spoke of her and her fall ; I saw again the group we formed among the oaks, a group, alas ! so widely scattered ! and after these reflections I hurried to

seek for some violets on a hillock facing the sun. They are the first we have seen. I put one here, which I offer you as the first-fruits of the spring at Le Cayla.

I have not told you what I did and saw at Gaillac ; it is not worth telling, except to speak of Louise. Yet I have seen very little of her ; she is so busy and engrossed, that we had no time for confidences. We are anxious, you do not write, neither does Caroline, nor anybody. It is post day, nothing comes. But I have written to you by M. Louis de Rivières, and have sent you one of my note-books. Will that not be worth a word of answer ?

March 15th, 1838. — A letter, but not from you ! It is from Euphrasie, who gives me news of Lili, sad news that makes me fear that we shall lose our poor friend. I am going to Cahuzac to tell my aunt about it.

March 16th, 1838. — La Vialarette will bring you no more chestnuts and pastry from Cordes ; poor girl, she died last night. I miss her for her good qualities, her fidelity, her attachment to us. Were we ill, she was there ; she was ready for any service, and at the same time so discreet and reliable, one of the few to whom one can confide a secret. That was the sublime trait in her character, it seems to me, that religious keeping of secrets, and one that she had not acquired by education.

None of the women of Andillac can be compared to poor Marie for lofty sentiments or for strong and earnest faith. You should have heard her talking

clearly and straight to the philosopher of the village, to those who spoke disrespectfully of God, of confession, of all the sacred things they make light of in the evenings. Oh ! she loved them, she went to confession, fasted, held lent with five sous worth of oil, believed in Heaven, and will be there, I hope. God will have received this pure and simple soul. Her only fault was little outbursts of temper, peculiarities of character that sometimes brought her into disfavour with her neighbours. But that was soon forgotten; a kind action wiped out her words, and now all sing her praises.

I went to see her last evening, she did not know me. I took her hand, but it was cold and without any pulse ; as I went away I knew too well that I had seen her for the last time. That cold hand, in which the blood throbbed no longer, told me that it was death I had touched. How sad it is, how sombre, how dreadful, this passing to another life ! O God ! what would become of us, if it were not for the light and the hopes that faith casts over it all ! Happy those who can hope, who can say, like Vialarette : " I have known God, and served Him." Her knowledge did not extend much beyond the catechism, her prayers beyond the *Paternoster* ; but all is comprised therein for the Christian, great and small. Would to Heaven that M. de Lammenais stopped short there !

Mimi served as sister of charity to our poor friend, and by her exhortations lent her strength in her sufferings. To her the dying girl entrusted her confidences concerning the other life, the masses she wished said for the repose of her soul, and confided to

her for that purpose sixty francs she had put away in a bundle of sticks, sticks gathered branch by branch, like the money sou by sou. Holy thought of the poor ! What merit this hoard must have in the eyes of God ! Of how much cold, heat, journeyings to and fro, toils and privations it is composed ! Who knows the morsels of bread saved from her hunger, so as to give the price to her soul ? Simple and admirable faith !

March 17th, 1838. — I have just come back from the funeral of that poor girl, the first that I have seen laid in the grave. It was a painful sight, but I was anxious to accompany to her last home one who had neither brother nor sister, who has followed to this cemetery all of our family she has seen die, one who had made the same journey for us, alas ! on the same day, a Saturday. I wished to give her this last mark of affection, and accompany her with my prayers to the verge of the other world. I heard the mass at the side of her coffin.

There was a time when that would have frightened me ; at present somehow death seems to me quite natural ; coffins, deaths, graves, cemeteries, inspire in me only feelings of faith, and raise my soul to Heaven. What impressed me most was hearing the coffin descend into the grave, a heavy and dismal sound, the last that man makes. Oh ! how it penetrates, how deeply it sinks into the soul of the listener ! But all do not hear it ; the gravediggers seemed to look on, as if it were a tree that were falling, little Cotive and other children looked in with an air of curiosity and astonishment just as they

would look into a ditch where there were flowers. Oh ! what indifference surrounds the grave ! With how much reason the saints die before their time, and perform their own obsequies in withdrawing from the world ! Is it worth while to remain in it ? No, it is not, but for a few dear friends whom God wishes us to keep company in this life. Here Father has come to visit me in my room, and as he went off he left two kisses on my brow. How can we leave these kind fathers ?

Still more anxiety on your account, no letters. I have just written to you at Paris. Now I am going to read a sermon by the fireside. The church is everywhere.

March 18th, 1838.—Rain, mud, wind, a wintry Sunday. A good little sermon to compensate me for the fatigue of the journey. We are uneasy this evening, no letter.

March 19th, 1838.—Vialarette's parents came to see us, and on leaving thanked us for the kindness we had shown her, and offered us anything we wished. . . . Among a heap of phials and other things, I saw a little white pot which we used to fill with jam for her every year. I asked for it as a souvenir. I have it, I keep it and look at it, the sacred little pot, like that of the widow of Sarepta.

A spell of spinning, a little reading, a little writing, a few glances at the rain, that is my day. I say nothing of what has gone on in my soul. Last night in a dream I saw your bed all in flames. What is the meaning of these fears about you night and day ?

Oh ! let me at least feel reassured about your health ! God knows there are plenty other things besides to trouble me. Shall we hear from you to-morrow ?

March 20th, 1838.—No letters.

March 21st, 1838.—I am waiting. To-morrow, perhaps, to-morrow.

March 24th, 1838.—Something at last ! It is not from you, but what does that matter ? I know that you are alive, that is enough. I had so many fears ! Heavens, what suffering your silence has caused me ! What torments, what imaginings, conjectures, sorrow ! What alarm at seeing that letter with the black seal ! Ah ! M. d'Aurevilly little knows the blow he gave me. I let his letter fall ; Érembert picked it up, opened it and gave it back to me. Then I understood, I read, I saw ; no more fear. The poor fear is the cause of all that. Such graceful thanks and greetings ! but far from welcome under that black seal ; so the effect has been only a sad one, some dismal thought remained in my heart, like a black dye on which no colour can show. I said to myself a hundred times : you believed him dead, he is alive, he is well, his health, they say, will soon equal his happiness ; but neither that nor anything else can remove the trouble on your account. I have taken up the letter again, and I see in it the certainty that you have been ill. Would your friend tell me that when I arrive in Paris I shall find you quite well, if you had not been suffering ? Oh ! yes, you are ill, I have had that idea for some time. Poor dear

health, that I can neither see nor care for. . . . There is nothing left for me but to commend it to God's care, my divine resource.

Sunday, March 25th, 1838.—Excellent sermon about confession. How clear it was, how simple and true ! How well he could bring within reach of the Andillac people the proofs of the divine institution of confession, called in question sometimes in the evenings, and at the same time instruct our poor philosophers, ignorant of their catechism ! I should have liked you to be present ; you would have been greatly pleased, especially when after having replied to objections, confounded the malicious, rejected the excuses and put aside the denials, he spoke of the blessings of confession, of the peace it creates in the individual, the family, the parish, accompanying that with examples, and ending by calling upon us all in the tone of a good pastor, calling us all to his feet, into his arms, into his heart : “ My brethren, a mother who loses her daughter feels no deeper sorrow than I when I see one of your souls perish in sin.” And those are not merely words, they are an expression of faith, of charity. It is what these good pastors think and feel. Oh ! how worthy they are of respect, those who have within them the spirit of God, who go on their way doing good ! I venerate them as I would relics. I do not esteem those who speak ill of them. That remark occurs to me with regard to certain scoffers. It is night ; but besides these people are not worth talking about. If I can, I shall return to this to-night before going to bed.

March 27th, 1838.—My presentiments have been quite true, you are ill, you have had three attacks, you have a cough. What a grief! My poor Maurice, must I also be far away from you, can I neither see you, nor hear your voice, nor take care of you? It is now that I long to be at Paris, to have a room beside yours, as here, so as to hear you breathe, sleep and cough. Oh! I hear it all across these two hundred leagues! Oh! distance, distance! I suffer greatly, but it is God's will that I should pay thus for my sisterly love. No happiness without bitterness, nor even without sacrifice. If I were beside you, I believe you would improve, for I would look after what you eat and drink, even the air you breathe. Would that Providence might do this and preserve you as the apple of my eye! And then I find consolation in that kind and tender child who is a sister to you. She has just written to Éran, she told him that you have been ill, and not to say anything of it to your sisters. Dear Caro, she knows how quickly sisters grow alarmed. How I love her, how glad I am to know that you are beside her, how I thank God for that! What would become of you in your Hôtel de Port-Mahon, alone with men? Your friend would be there; but no matter what he does, or says, a man cannot do for an invalid what a woman does, any more than he can for a child. Weakness and suffering need these attentions, these comforts and these kindnesses that we invent.

March 28th, 1838.—Oh! some letters, letters full of affection, letters full of trouble, for they are the same. Our good aunt tells us, like Caro, that you

have had three attacks, that you arrived at Paris pale, exhausted and mournful, all of which rend my heart. God knows what I would do if I could feel that you are not suffering in body or soul. But I am quite helpless. All I can do is to pray; and I pray, and I hope, because faith is powerful. My feelings, my experience, teach me the great help of God. Oh! if our hopes, as Saint Paul says, were limited to this life alone, we would be the most miserable of creatures.

Here is Lucie, my little god-daughter, come to bid me good-night. I must kiss her, then hear her say her catechism. I love to instruct children, to open their little minds, to see what perfumes are contained in these buds. In Lucie I find a certain penetration, memory and a sweetness of character which makes this child soft and yielding. I am going to impart to her the knowledge of God, the only knowledge indispensable to all in this sad and brief life, as M. de Lamennais, I think, has said.

My catechism over, I am going to read a sermon; we are in Lent, a time when the soul is nourished on holy things more than ever. Besides I am in want of them to counterbalance the troubles, anxieties and fears that weigh on my heart. Oh! my friend, why do you not have recourse to that, why do you not seek divine help? You would not be so dejected; I believe that amidst your apparent happiness you are wretched, and that this is the cause of your malady. Most evils come from the soul; yours, poor friend, is so ill, so ill! I know well what could cure it, or at least relieve it, you understand me; it is to restore it to the Christian faith, to bring it into communion

with God by the performance of religious duties, to let it live by faith, to set it in harmony with its nature. Oh ! then there is peace and happiness, so far as that is possible for man ; the tranquillity of order, a rare and admirable thing that can be attained only by the subjugation of the passions. That can be seen in the saints.

March 29th, 1838. — Wrote two letters, one to Marie, the other to Irène, that friend at Lisle. I owe her this remembrance, this gratitude for her old and steady friendship. It was she who wrote to me first seven years ago, I think, after a few days' acquaintance at Lisle. Among women friendship is soon made ; a favour, a word, any trifle serves to form the connection ; but as a rule these are but knots of ribbon which causes it to be said that women do not love each other. That I cannot tell ; we can love for one day, two days, more or less, but in all sincerity : affections of a moment that I have always dreaded for myself and my friends. Nothing is so sad as a dead thing in the heart, turning the heart into a coffin. So as soon as I feel or see any attachment dying down, I hasten to revive it.

So I am going to write to L*** *of the mountains*, who has seemed to me slightly changed of late. Perhaps it was preoccupation, company, her surroundings ; but she has given me some reason to fear, to doubt her friendship. However, when I think of the tears that flowed down her cheeks when I said good-bye to her last year, all that vanishes from my mind.

As for what are called acquaintances, I have no lack of these, and I know not how that comes about ;

I quit my desert so seldom, and, like Paul the Hermit, would live willingly for a hundred years in my retreat without enquiring after the rest of the world. God wills it, no doubt, for some end unknown to me. Providence guides all things, even to the most trifling event. That consciousness makes us submit.

I have just been reading the story of the child raised from the dead by Elisha. Oh ! if I only knew some prophet, someone who could restore life and health, I should go like the Shunamite and cast myself at his feet.

March 30th, 1838.—The beautiful weather, the mild air, how much good they would do you ! I think of it, and all this spring I shall think of it, and regret that I cannot see you breathing it in. That would do you much more good than the air of Paris. That poisonous air of cities will kill you. Why cannot you live with us, my friend ! How it grieves me to see you banished, as it were, from your family ! Oh ! fortune, fortune ! what suffering it brings when it is unkind ! We have suffered much on your account.

March 31st, 1838.—I know not who or what made me throw my note-book under the counterpane of your bed : there is an interruption and concealment whenever anyone comes in. I write only for you, and so use the first stratagem that occurs to me : sometimes it is a letter to write, some notes to make ; but what is always useful is the book of poems that Father has asked me for. I copy three or four verses each day, and when Father comes into my room and says, "What are you doing ?" I reply, "The note-

book." That is not a falsehood ; only I keep two, and am more attached to the one than to the other. Still I shall finish the one for Father since he has set his heart on it : he well deserves that I should try to please him also, that dear father who would give me the moon.

Why cannot I give something to each ! A mark of affection to brothers and sister, to all whom I love. Let us see how I would make my will. To you, my Journal, my pen-knife, the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine. To Father, my poems ; to Érembert, Lamartine ; to Mimi, my rosary, my little knife, *The Way to Calvary*, *The Meditations* of Father Judde. To Louise, *The Spiritual Conflict* ; to Mimi also my *Imitation* ; to Antoinette, *The Burning Soul*. To you also my little strong-box for your secrets, on condition that you burn all mine, if there should be any in it. What would you do with them ? They are affairs of conscience, some of those matters that lie between the soul and God, some letters of counsel from M. Bories and that good Norman curé whom I have mentioned. I keep them as a souvenir, and because I require them ; they are *my papers*, which, however, must not see the light of day. If, then, what I write here for amusement should come to pass, if you become my heir, remember to burn all the contents of this box.

April 2nd, 1838.—“ If the inevitable necessity of death saddens human nature, the promise of future immortality encourages and consoles our faith ; for to the faithful, O Lord, to die is not to lose their life.” That, my friend, is what I have read in the

preface to the Dead, and what I think of all this day, which is the anniversary of our mother's death. We heard mass for her this morning. You were hearing it also at Paris, and I beheld you with joy in this communion of prayers. I thought that my mother looked down on you more than any other, and sent you some blessing from Heaven, as Rachel would have done to her son Benjamin. Were not you her last-born and her darling child? I remember how you made me a little jealous, and how I envied you the extra share of caresses, sweets and kisses that you got. It was because I was a little bigger. I knew not that with years love changes its mode of expression, and that tenderness and caresses, the milk of the heart, always go out towards the youngest. But my bitterness was short-lived, and as soon as reason dawned, I began to love you dearly, with a love that still endures. Mother was glad at this union, this sisterly affection, and delighted to see you on my knee, heart on heart, as we are now, only with our love strengthened. If what happens on earth can be seen from the other world, my mother must rejoice that we love each other thus, that this love is helpful, sweet and consoling, that we exchange counsel, admonition, prayers, comfort for the soul.

But you yourself no longer pray. . . . That is sad. There is no day, above all to-day, that I do not feel the power of faith over my soul, sometimes calming, restraining, elevating it. This morning I was wretched; death, tears, partings, this life of sorrow, overwhelmed me; and still more anxiety, dread, anguish, a demon's claw in the soul, a vague distress was beginning. Well, here I am calm at

present, and this I owe to faith, to nothing but faith, an act of faith. I am thinking of my mother, of death, of eternity, without pain or dread. On a mournful background floats a divine calm, a sweetness that God alone can bestow. In vain have I tried other means on such an occasion; nothing human can console or sustain the soul.

A l'enfant il faut sa mère,
A mon âme il faut mon Dieu.

April 3rd, 1838.—I was expecting letters from Paris, news from you, but nothing has come. What can I say or think? Doubt is a wretched thing, either in the mind or in the heart. God deliver us from it! Father has gone to Andillac to see if the carrier has left anything; I am waiting here in my little room, my resting-place. Oh! how weary I am! weariness of the soul, but what does it matter? I want to work, I want to write, I do not want to give way. Someone is waiting for a letter. I had one the day before yesterday from Félicité and one from Marie de Thézac. Letters are not scarce, except yours.

April 4th, 1838.—It is cold, it rains and snows. The weary wind howls at my window, and makes me long to answer it; but what can I say to the wind, to a little restless air? Alas! what else are we ourselves often? I had a great dream last night. I was with M. de Lamennais, I was speaking to him of you, of his works old and new; our conversation was lively, and our opinions differed, for he was not consistent with himself. He contradicted

everything he formerly said. And I pitied him, the poor lost man ! “ Oh ! you detest the heretic.” “ No, Monsieur, no ; you grieve me deeply, you seem to me a lost star, but one which cannot fail to reappear in the sky.” And thereupon he and I and the house which we were in, all got mixed up in the chaos of sleep ; but that remained in my memory, and all day that genius has been in my thoughts. When I think that you have lived in his house, with him, that you have received his lessons, the interest I take in him becomes still closer. Oh ! how that man fills my thoughts, how I often think of his salvation and pray to God for him, how I mourn over his glory, his saintly glory ! It has often occurred to me to write to him without giving my name, to let him hear a mysterious voice of supplication and tears. Madness, and audacity on my part ; but one woman has crossed his path to do the work of the devil, and complete the damnation of this priest ; can another not draw near to him to do the work of Heaven ?

To-day a worthy and pious man is being laid in the grave, Durel de Lentin, of the village of Les Merix, a model peasant, simple, good, religious, respectful, who used to take off his hat to us till it touched the ground. He was one of those that we cannot help greeting as though they were virtue personified. These men are very rare, they are disappearing, and none like them seem to be taking their place.

April 5th, 1838.—A letter from Mlle. Martin : arrival of M. de Faramond, these are the events of the morning. I must think of dinner, and of helping Mimi.

April 6th, 1838.—Nineteen years ago there was born on the banks of the Ganges, a tiny, frail child who was called Caroline. She grows up a beautiful and charming girl, and to-day she is your betrothed. I admire your good fortune, my friend, and the way God has shown His care in the companion He has given you, that Eve who has come from the East with so many graces and charms. I see in her besides so many good qualities of heart, such sweetness, kindness, devotion, candour; everything about her is so beautiful and good that I look upon her as a treasure bestowed on you by Heaven. May you be united and happy! We have just heard mass said for you, and, in the words of Mlle. Martin, have prayed God to make Caroline happy and give her graces needful for the new life that is going to open out before her. Oh! it is with all our heart that we take this view. Let us have Heaven on our side, let us ask from God what we need, poor, impotent creatures that we are. The good pastor will say another mass for you to-morrow; it was he himself who offered: "We must also pray for M. Maurice. . . ." The idea of the bouquet continued, a presentiment of your union.

April 7th, 1838.—"Where do you think I have just come from, my dear Marie? You will never guess; from basking in the sunshine in the cemetery. A dismal spot to warm myself, if you will, but there one is among one's kindred. There I was beside my grandfather, uncles, ancestors, a host of loved ones that were gone. The only one not there was my mother, who, alas! rests a good way from here. But what was I doing there? Do you think I am

fond of tombs? No more than anyone else, my dear. It was because I went to confession this morning, and as there were a number of people there, and it was cold in the church, I went out and sat in the sunshine in the cemetery; there I sat musing, and my thoughts turned to the other world, and the reckoning that must be given up to God. A grave is a good book of self-examination. How well we read the truth there, how we find light, how our illusions, our dreams of life vanish there, and with them all their enchantment! As we come forth the world is reckoned at its true worth, and we cling to it less.

Le pied sur une tombe, on tient moins à la terre.

There is no dancer who would not doff her ball-dress and her wreath, no maiden who would not forget her beauty, no one who would not come back better from this land of the dead.

But what am I telling my poor invalid? Forgive me, my dear friend, I ought to cheer you, distract you, sing for you something like the joyous bullfinch; but I am a bird who alights everywhere, and warbles to you according to places and emotions. But you who are all goodness, must listen to me with indulgence, not too much astonished at what comes from my heart, though it be often little in keeping with your own thoughts. Notwithstanding our sympathies, there are in us differences of nature and education which would make me fear for myself and for our friendship, did I not feel that it is the work of God, and rests upon no human tie. That we should not know each other, that we should not have seen each other and yet that we should have loved each other, is not that quite spiritual? So I feel for you an

affection altogether sacred, something in my heart that is all tenderness and prayers for you.

How I long to see you happy ! Who can make you happy ? Wherein do you think your happiness lies ? Tell me, that I may help you to find it. It is for nothing else that I am your friend. Let us look, let us search. What a quest ! Have you read the story of the king who was broken-hearted at the death of his wife, and to whom a philosopher promised to restore her to life again provided there were found three happy people whose names could be carved on the tomb of the queen. They could never be found. Which means, no doubt, that our soul would remain dead, if in order to live it required human happiness. But, on the contrary, it must come forth from the limits of the world, and carry its search beyond, that is, in God, in the Christian life, which is not of this world. The world cannot yield happiness ; those who have loved it most tell us so. It distracts us, but cannot fill the void in our hearts. *Oh ! the world has fair gatherings that cast their spell over us ; but, be assured you will feel cold and lonely in the midst of that gay throng.* In these frank expressions, in that confession a woman who loved the world, lies the condemnation of the world itself. What sadness in that isolation, that icy coldness that wraps the heart even in the midst of pleasures and of those who share in them ! That alone would make me renounce them if ever they came my way.

Do you know, my dear Marie, that you do me good by your reflections, that you show me something of the world in your letters, which are veritable pictures, that you free me from my illusions, from all that

makes us unhappy. Your experience instructs me, and I thank God a hundred times for my retired and tranquil life. Otherwise what danger there would be ! I feel in my own heart all that I see in others ; the same leaven is in all, but it shows itself differently according to circumstances and will, for the will counts for much in the development of the heart. We help it to be good or bad, weak or strong, almost as we rear a child. Thus the Gospel tells us we shall be judged not by our inclinations but by our works. Oh ! when we think of that judgment, we have need to watch over our lives, our hearts ; there are so many dangers lurking within and without ! Oh ! how that fills us with dread, how it makes us take precautions and almost long to quit this world !

Ah ! mon âme craint tant de se souiller sur terre !
Ah ! comment conserver sa divine blancheur
Au milieu de la fange et parmi la poussière
Qui s'attache ici bas à tout, même à la fleur ?

That is something for *your ejaculatory prayers*, I am quite pleased to provide you with them. You might make holier ones, but do not utter them so loud in the midst of a drawing room ; my vanity is listening, take care.

One sorrow, one regret on this occasion : I see that my packet for Ile de France is still in your possession. My poor cousin must have died thinking that I had forgotten him. That is the only thing I regret. I congratulate myself over much on the fortune that delivered that letter to you and gained for me your friendship. From that day you have loved me, you

say. Why did you not say it sooner ! It has required many days, events and circumstances to link us together at last. But when shall we meet ? It will not be your fault if that is not soon, and I know not how to thank you for your kind invitation. How much I should be indebted to you ! I do not accept yet, as I have not yet fixed the date of my journey to Paris. I shall go only for the marriage, or afterwards. They are expecting papers from Calcutta which will decide the matter at once.

How I long to know if my brother will have a suitable position ! I am very anxious about his future, especially about his health. That precious health, how many fears it causes ! He is ill again ; he has had three attacks, and the paleness has come back. They tell us he is better, that the fever is leaving him ; but I am afraid they are deceiving us, and I beg you not to deceive me ; be so good as to send someone to see him, and tell me frankly how things are. It was only too true when he bade you tell us that his doctor ordered him not to go out. I too would forbid him that bad air of Paris, and above all keep him from all excitement. That is what is killing him. They must keep from him everything that affects the heart. I thank M. de M*** for the visit he was good enough to pay him, and you for that kind interest in him, which you still retain, I hope.

But let us speak of you, of your dear health, which interests me also, you know. No, you do not know it, nor all the pleasure these words have given me, " I am better, much better." Oh ! may that improvement last ! May it go on increasing, so that when I

see you I shall find you quite cured, dear patient, *cured*, do you understand? You must work for that, follow the advice of your doctor, think only of your health ; merely for the sake of my happiness, cultivate friendship a little, which, moreover, consoles us for many things. Then, with God's help, we shall see if everything will go better. Nor forget your prayers, that balm for the soul ; if my book is to your taste, read it, and your *guardian angel* will be content. What name is that I am taking? But I accept everything from you, and thank God that I can be helpful to you under any appellation whatever.

Do you know the fever inspires you finely, and your *hymn to suffering* has quite struck me. It is Byronic. But do not take such subjects for your poems, I beg of you, nor show yourself crucified on this Calvary without hope where your sufferings tell you : *Thou shalt not escape us, fate has marked thee in thy cradle, thou belongst to us*. It is true, we are born, as it were, dedicated to misfortune. Each of us has his suffering ; yet like this martyr, if we are Christians, we suffer but we see the heavens open to us. Oh ! faith, faith ! that alone consoles me and lets me understand life. This is speaking to you with open heart, for I love you. Adieu, I give you back a kiss as tender as your own."

That is what I was writing this morning to a friend, whom I love greatly, though our friendship is not yet old. The tone I adopt with her is not that of one woman writing to another, nor of gossip about trifles ; it forces itself upon me, the inspiration is in the expectations she has in me. Alas ! alas ! poor sick soul !

What is shyness? What does it arise from? I have been inquiring; I have asked myself what makes us blush, what keeps us from speaking, from appearing before someone, and yet it remains a mystery to me. Again this morning I had something to say to M. le Curé, who certainly does not make one feel abashed, but I could not make up my mind to pass the sacristy. How silly! one feels it painfully; something strangles and compresses us, until it seems as if the blood had ceased to circulate and had gathered at the heart, which goes *thump, thump* with great throbs.

April 8th, 1838.—Poor Lili! she is dying, I have just learned that she is dying of consumption. It is the troubles of the heart that have killed her; she is yielding to the many blows that have fallen upon her for the last ten years. Paul has just given us this sad news, and told one of us to go and see the invalid, who is asking for us. We shall go next week, after Easter. To-day is Palm Sunday. I have just placed mine in my chapel, you know the one, under Saint Theresa. It will be withered next year, alas! and many other things as well! I must write to Louise.

April 9th, 1838.—A letter from Caroline at last! I know, I hear, I read that you are quite well. What a joy! Must I also read: "Maurice is sad, with a deep sadness that I strive to dispel; I read it in his eyes. . . ." My poor friend, whatever is wrong with you, unless it is the fever that weighs you down. Are you not content with your life, which has never been so sweet? Are you not happy beside that beautiful and good child who loves you, happy

at your approaching union, at the future? Ah! I believe that nothing pleases you: a delight once tasted, it is at an end, it is exhausted. Perhaps I am wrong, but I fancy I can perceive in you some poison that wastes you away and will kill you if God does not deliver you from it. How much sorrow you cause me! If only I could do something to help you; but we are separated! You will tell me, will you not? what is this sadness that you have brought with you from here. Is it regret at leaving us? That is a grief, but not a devouring one; and then in leaving sisters for a *fiancée*, the sweet for the more sweet, one finds consolation. This is more than I would seek to know, more than I would say. We shall see, alas! we shall see. I have gloomy forebodings.

The swallows, oh! the swallows that go past! the first I have seen. I love them, these harbingers of spring, these birds that follow the soft sunshine, songs, perfumes and verdure. Their wings exhale a mysterious influence which casts a charm over me as I watch them fly; I would spend whole hours at that. I think of the past, of the time when we used to chase them in the hall; when we raised up a plank in the garret to see their nests, touch their eggs and see the young ones; bright memories of childhood, of which all things here are full, if only one looks. Walls, flowers, birds, all have their associations. Some little chickens have just been hatched and are chirping at the fireside. Still another source of pleasure. Every birth brings joy.

April 10th, 1838. — The date is set down, so I must write something. What will it be? What

shall this leaf of paper bear? Nothing; nothing has come, nothing has happened in our solitude. Except some bird's song, no sound of life has been heard; a splendid sun went on his way above this calm; seated in my room, I knitted industriously a pair of stockings for Jeanne-Marie, reading all the time. I was reading about the marvellous age of Saint Louis, the time when so great a king and such great saints were to be seen.

April 21st, 1838.—I have come back from Albi, where I have just left our dear Lili in the cemetery. What a grief! What regrets, what a void, what memories! O God! to see those whom we love die; to say to ourselves, "It is all over, thou wilt never see her again! no, never; eternity between us! but the blessed eternity, I hope." Therein lies the consolation. My friend, what would become of us without that, without a little faith in the soul? That is what sustains it, keeps it from falling into an abyss of grief and despair. Lili, my saintly Lili, how happy I think her! how I behold her in an infinite splendour, an unchangeable peace, undisturbed repose! It is she who pities us, us, her friends whom she sees in this wretched world, amid sorrow, unrest and anguish! Oh! how I have seen her suffer, but with what calm, the poor martyr! So everyone called her the saint; that was visible on her face, full of celestial beauty after her death.

I did not see her then, but a little before. On my knees beside her bed, I read to her Bossuet's prayers in preparation for death, which I had brought specially for her. When I started from here

on Thursday before Easter, I knew too well it was to see her die. I thought of this provision for her soul, the last mark, alas ! of my friendship. I took this diary with me also, I always think of you, and wished to write about this death ; but it was impossible to do anything but pray and stay beside the dying girl. On arriving I found your letter which Mimi sent on. What a pleasure at any other time ! You are better, very happy, lively, very lively, you say ; but this death spoils my pleasure in everything, makes me too sad to feel any joy. It is not that I am in tears, nor heart-broken, at the bottom of my heart there is calm, an inward mourning, in short, I know not what grief, but grief it is, for I loved Lili and I have lost her. . . . It took place on Monday, 17th April, at midnight ; I had left her at four o'clock. Father did not wish to let me see her again, and took me away to Madame Combe's, where I received the greatest hospitality for two days. Nérine de Tonnac, my old friend, was beside me, and was my dear companion day and night. I am very grateful to her for what she did for me on that occasion. I must write to Caro ; then I shall come back to this, if I can.

April 25th, 1838.—I have been unable to write anything for the last three days, and even now it is only for a moment that I retire hither. Lili is never absent from my thoughts, and I feel in the mood to speak of her. When I hear the bells I think of the saintly prayers she repeated at church, even here in my little room ; when I see the sky I say to myself she is there and I ask many things

from her. Friends surely have much power in gaining for us the grace of God. Here is M. F***, a not unwelcome visit ; we shall talk of Lili. To-morrow there is a great solemnity at Andillac, a first communion. Augustine, young as she is, is among the happy children. After a time she might be better informed, but M. le Curé prefers innocence to knowledge, and I think he is right. To-morrow the good man will display all his zeal as a pastor, all his tender charity. It is a bright day for him too.

April 29th, 1838.—What a touching ceremony ! So sweet and pious and simple ! I have only time to mention it and to say that of all ceremonies the one I love most is a first communion in the country, God in all simplicity giving himself to the children. Miou, little Françonil de Gaillard and Augustine were bewitching in their innocence and beauty. How pretty they were, when returning from the holy table ! They wept under their little white veils ! Divine tears ! Children united to God, who could tell what was going on in their souls at that moment ? It was our Saviour saying to the children, “Come unto me.” Oh ! how lovingly he spoke to them, how he then commended to them that white dress, that innocence in which they were clothed ! Poor children, how many risks ! I said to myself, “Which of you will be the first to stain it ?” They are not going to Paris ; but this earth is soiled everywhere, evil is found everywhere, tempting and seductive.

May 2nd, 1838. — Yesterday, the 1st of May, I could write nothing. Yet it was a lovely day in

heaven and earth, bright sunshine, much music among the birds, and three letters; Antoinette, Marie de Thézac and Caro met in my hands. I love them all and their letters; but Caro's seem the letters of a sister, full of tenderness and affection for you and us. It is delightful to have friends of this sort, devoted and disinterested. There are few to be found. Since Victor and Philibert we have no more friends of our heart. The good pastor also is quite devoted to us: he came to spend the day, and made himself agreeable and gay. In the evening I felt better; this quiet gaiety does me good, uplifts the heart, and I love those who bring it. This time I repayed it with a little tribute of courtesy. This is how it was: M. le Curé is entrusted with all the ceremonials of the church at G. . . for the arrival of the Archbishop, who is to perform the confirmation. He requires some mottoes, he asked me for some, and I could not say no. I do not like to refuse. That annoyed me a little; I do not care for mottoes, which are all stupid. I have made some in dialect to save the honour of French. Besides it is the language of the country.

The day before yesterday *** wrote to me. I am anxious about her health. Oh! how the passions unsettle us, how they shatter our heart and our body! There is no recovery without the help of God. Can He help her? My advice is of little avail. Who knows what you are doing! All these things trouble me greatly.

May 3rd, 1838.—We are back from the village where we have been seeing Romiguières who is very

M

unwell. I fear he will never be better. Thus our neighbours are leaving us one after the other. First Vialarette, then this other neighbour, who came much to our house. I miss them: these worthy people are better friends than one thinks, and better than one finds in society. Devotion is not always confined to the highest rank. Such is the close of this book, full enough of mourning, three deaths under our eyes. Ah! who will be the next to follow them? They, at least, were ready to give an account of their lives, good Christians, and good souls, as they were. Romiguières himself asked for M. le Curé during the night. When he had received the last sacrament, he soon after turned delirious.

Now, my little book, you go under lock and key.

VII.

May 3rd, 1838, evening. — Nothing nice has happened since this morning, except that a lamb has been born, and I have started this new book with the song of the nightingale ringing in my ears, and before me two vases of flowers which perfume my room. It is delightful to write with these perfumes around me, to pray, to think, to let the soul wander amidst them. I brought these flowers this morning to make my table look like an altar with a cross in the middle, and to keep Mary's month there. It is growing dark.

May 5th, 1838.—I am tired of writing, two long letters have made my hand stiff. So I shall not put much here ; but I wish to record a lovely day, calm, mild and fresh, a true spring morning. Everything is full of song and blossom. We are just back from our walk, Father, I and my dog, Lili's pretty dog : dear little creature ! he never leaves me ; when I sit down he jumps on my knee ; if I am walking he follows me about. One could fancy he understands one, and knows that I have taken the place of his mistress. We have brought

back some flowers, white, violet and blue, which make us a charming bouquet. I have broken off two to send to E*** in a letter, they are Eleven-o'clock-ladies; apparently this name is given them because they open then, as others do at different hours, charming rustic clocks, flower clocks which mark the flight of such beautiful hours. Perhaps the birds consult them, and regulate their sleep, their meals and their meetings by the flowers. Why not? In nature all things are in harmony; there are mysterious affinities which unite the eagle with the blade of grass, and the angels with ourselves in the spiritual world. I shall have a nest under my window; a turtle-dove has just been singing on the acacia where there was a nest last year. Perhaps it is the same one. That place has suited her, and like a good mother she places her cradle there again.

May 7th, 1838. — They came this morning at four o'clock to ask Father for planks to make poor Romiguière's coffin. We are losing all our friends at Pausadou. Two deaths within a few days! How sudden it was for Vialarette, and now for him! It is night, and having written to Antoinette, Marie and Caro, I am going away, but in a more calm and restful mood. Nothing does me so much good as writing, for then I forget myself. Prayer has the same soothing effect on me, and even better, inasmuch as it breathes a certain sweetness into the soul.

May 12th, 1838. — I have written nothing here for the last five days; meanwhile the leaves, flowers and

roses have come. There is one in front of me, the first of spring, surrounding me with its fragrance. I like to record the day of this fair arrival. Who knows what springtimes I shall live over again in books, or in a rose leaf marked with the day and the year? One of these leaves went to Ile de France where it delighted poor Philibert. Alas! it will have vanished like himself! Though I miss him, it is not that, but something else, I know not what, that saddens me and keeps me dull to-day. Unhappy soul! unhappy soul! whatever is the matter with you? What do you want? What can cure you? Everywhere are flowers and verdure, the songs of birds; the air is laden with perfume as though it were the breath of a flower. Oh! it is so beautiful! Let us go out. No, I should be alone, and beautiful solitude is worthless. Eve showed that in Eden. What is to be done, then? Read, write, pray, take a basket of sand on my head, like that lonely man, and walk. Yes, work, work! to occupy the body that injures the soul. I have been too quiet to-day, a thing which does me harm, and allows that feeling of *ennui* that possesses me to grow stagnant.

Why do I suffer from *ennui*? Is it because I have not all I want, all I love, except you? Sometimes I think it is the idea of the convent which causes it, which invites me and yet makes me sad. I envy the happiness of a Saint Theresa, of Saint Paul at Bethlehem. If I could only find myself in some holy solitude! . . . The world is not my home; my future would then be settled, and at present I know not what it will be. What sort of sister-in-law shall we have? I know two sisters who, on the death of

their father, were turned out of the house, and I consider that so bitter. Then in retirement one becomes surer of Heaven. These are my reasons, not yours; I must leave you. I wish to tell you no more until I am calm, I should tell you nothing good. Adieu till . . .

Here were three letters for me to-night, from Euphrasie, from Marie, from Lucie, girls very different from each other, yet each with her charm. We women are as varied as flowers, and that does not disturb us.

May 14th, 1838. — No writing yesterday as it was Sunday. This is St Pacomius' day, the father of monks. I have just been reading his life which is very beautiful. These lives of hermits have a great charm for me, above all those that one can hope to imitate. As for the others we admire them as pyramids. In general, when they are read with discernment, there is something good to be found in them, even in the most exaggerated characteristics: they are the blows that heroes strike for devotion and the admiration of lofty things.

In spite of that, for many people, the *Life of the Saints* seems to me a dangerous book. I would not recommend it to a young girl, nor even to others who are not young. Reading has such power over the heart, which sometimes goes astray from devotion to God. Alas! we have seen it in poor C***. What care we should take of the young, of their books, their pens, their companions, their devotions, things which all demand a mother's tender thought. If mine had lived there were many things I remember

doing at the age of fourteen that she would not have allowed. In God's name I would have done anything, I would have thrown myself into a furnace, and surely that was not God's will. He does not approve of the harm done to one's health by that ardent but mistaken piety, which often while destroying the body allows many moral faults to remain. Thus St Francis de Sales said to some nuns who asked permission to go barefooted ; "Change your hearts and keep your shoes."

May 15th, 1838. — Yesterday a visit cut short our talk ; I resume, though less in a mood for talking, on account of a pain at my heart. It is your letter which has done that, for it made me anxious again about your health. Why are you taking ass's milk ? Why do you say the spring will completely restore you to health ? Is it not because your health is less satisfactory than you said at first ? Those in good health do not speak of cures. We are being misled, you are misleading us ; the Paris air is not good for you, it will kill you as it killed poor Victor. I tremble at the resemblance there is between you. O Lord ! keep me from these mournful thoughts ! My friend, I long for a letter from you ; to-day's is for everybody and it is something confidential that I want. Friendship feeds on that.

I have been here for some time ; Mimi is alone. I am going to join her. I was amusing myself reading old letters. Father arrived to-night with his wallet stuffed with books ; Éran has come back from the fair with some pigs, some cakes and some cheese ; a pedlar, a few swallows which have gone past, so much

for a day at Le Cayla. Now the talk is of supper ;
Oh ! mouth !

May 16th, 1838. — We are going in a body to Frauseilles, to see our bell cast. This excursion amuses me greatly, I am off.

May 17th, 1838. — Oh ! it was not worth the trouble, we have] seen nothing. The bell is cast and made underground, nothing is visible except the furnace ; flame and smoke. Still there was a crowd of people from Andillac and the places round about, and what amused me was to see some inquisitive people still more taken in than myself, to say to them, “ What did you see ? ”

I am not in the mood for writing ; the wind is strong enough to carry away everything, ideas and all. But for that I would tell you all that occurred to me as I stood beside the furnace ; thoughts pious, gay and sad ; what years, centuries, baptisms, deaths, marriages, fires, I cast along with that bell. When it comes to an end who knows what will have come to an end in Andillac and in the world ? Bells endure for centuries, time without end, unless for some disaster or a revolution. So, many as were present, not one of us shall see it cast again. That alone is solemn ; *to see no more what one sees*. There is something in that thought that makes us look] again, though it be but on a blade of grass. Thus I thought of the church at Frauseilles where I spent a moment in meditation, and where I looked earnestly at the door closed *for ever*, for probably I shall never return there again. How mournful these words must be for places

to which the heart is attached ! If I saw the door of Le Cayla shut for ever, the garden door, Father's door, the door of my little room ! Oh ! what must it be with the door of Heaven !

Why are you not here ? We would share the two apples Julie de Gaillard gave me, whom I went to see as one from the same district. The good woman knew not what to do with me, how to express her delight at my visit. My walk to Frauseilles has not been lost ; I have given someone pleasure, I have caressed a little child in its cradle, in passing near the cemetery I saw the graves of our old friends from Clairacs, marked by an iron cross. Nothing is visible but that, the ground soon grows level over graves ! What do appearances matter ? The soul, the life is not there. O God ! that would be too awful. Amidst all that I thought much of you, because there were a number of curés who asked for you, and I was glad to see that you were in favour with the Church. Adieu ; you see I have said nothing. Ten o'clock in the evening. It is a dark night, but that is always the time to listen to the crickets, the brook and a nightingale, only one, who sings, sings, sings in that darkness. How well that music accompanies the evening prayer ?

May 18th, 1838. — Impossible to go out, it is raining. It is a day for reading, for writing, as a substitute for walks, delightful spring occupations. At all hours of the day we are out ; we lead the life of a bird in the open air, under the shadows. It is charming, and how many varied pleasures there are meeting the eye at every step, if one only looks at

them ! Yesterday Mimi brought me some magnificent ribbons of grass striped with white and green, glossy and shining ; they were fit to fasten under the chin. I put them in a vase, where I still admire my ribbons though a little faded. They would be prettier under foot ; these articles of fashion should not come out of the woods.

I should like very much to know a little about botany ; it is a charming study in the country, full of enjoyments. One makes friends with nature, with the plants, the flowers, the mosses, which can be called by their names. Study botany, Maurice, and you will teach me it. That would be easy with a book on plants. But when will you be here in the spring ? You come just too late ; one cannot start botanising when winter has harvested all the beauties of nature, to use the expression of our friend, St Francis de Sales ; no more flowers then, and it is the flowers that interest me because they are so pretty on these green carpets. I should like to know their family, their tastes, what butterflies they love, how many drops of dew they need, all their properties, so as to make use of them when needful. Flowers are good for invalids. God creates His gifts for so many ends ! Everything is full of His wonderful goodness to us ; look at the rose which after having given honey to the bee, perfume to the air, provides us still with a water so soft for sore eyes. I remember putting compresses of it on you when you were little. Every year we make some flasks of that water, and people often come and ask for it.

But I said this was a day for writing. Writing what ? I know not, but I feel that I would write.

If I had a plan, a frame made, I would fill it in a little every day, and that would do me good. The overflowing of the mind sometimes forms a torrent, and it is better to give it free passage. I seldom pour forth my thoughts anywhere but here, and that very little because . . . the paper flies. Who knows when I cast it towards Paris where it will fall? So it happens that I erase some things when I read them over again; you have seen that in the last note-book. It was about É***; I had allowed myself to indulge in too lively, and even mistaken descriptions; I have seen that since by her letters. She is of a passionate kindness, without malice, without bitterness, frank in her faults, a child with a heart of fire. I regard this as something wonderful, coming, as it were, from God, and I am attached to the soul He has confided to me, the soul which says: "Love me, help me to mount to Heaven." Oh! I shall help her to the best of my power, I shall love her always, for holy friendship is but the flowing of the charity that never perishes.

The nightingale of last night has sung all day. What a throat! If he were English I would say he had made a bet.

May 19th, 1838.—Three letters and arrival of Éliza. The letters are from Louise, Marie and Euphrasie. Poor Euphrasie, so mournful, so heart-broken at the death of her dear aunt, fills me with pity. Such a kind heart, so warm, so tender, how she will suffer now. Lili was a mother to her.

May 24th, 1838.—A few words to-night when I

have time, when I am alone and thinking of you, when it is Ascension day, a beautiful holy day when the soul soars, soars to the sky. But no, I am very well where I am ; apparently we cannot tear ourselves away from writing. Someone is calling me.

May 26th, 1838.—Between these lines two days have passed without my writing to you, and since then have come letters, birds' nests, roses on the terrace, on my table, everywhere. Much news has come from Gaillac ; from a greater distance, the death of Prince Talleyrand ; that was something to write about if ever anything was, but we and Eliza were busy making tippets, and the whole world would pass under our needles, without our leaving them. How little suffices for us ! I wonder at it. I have not time to tell you why.

May 27th, 1838, evening.—First *Angelus* from our new bell. I have just been listening to it from the hall window, and I rose from table specially for that pleasure, followed, as it is, by so many varied thoughts that I love. Pious mingling of joy, mourning, time, eternity, cradles, biers, God : all these are in the tones of the bell, and rise up in my thoughts now. Oh ! above all, above all, I think what knell it will ring first ! for whom ? I shall record it ; on what page ? Perhaps I shall not be the one to record it. What living person can say : I shall speak of a death ? Ah ! we pass away so soon ! However I am well ; but I see flowers, placed quite fresh in a vase in the morning, withered and dead the same evening. So it is with us : the vessel in which we

have our life, holds no more than the life of a day.

Some visits from curés : the curé of the canton, that of Vieux and our own, three men of very different types. One without sense, another acquiring it, the third keeping it. They told us much about Church matters, which form an interesting topic for a moment ; but generally contraries please in conversation, the discussion of a thousand different things, it is that which makes the chat, a very rare thing. Each one can speak only of his particular interests, as the Auvergnats of their country. The mind remains at home as well as the heart.

Éliza has just left us, to my great regret. All departures are sad ; to console me I have a very tender and loving letter before my eyes and in my heart. It is not from you, it is from É***, who always tells me in a thousand ways that she loves me, that she is sick in body and mind, and that *I can strew flowers on the many barren hours of her life*. Poor friend ! poor woman ! how happy I deem myself in doing her good ! So I am going to give her all I can of sweetness, consolation, pious comfort, all possible flowers. How she suffers ! How someone has wronged her ! how that prompts me to cure her, to point out remedies ! I do not despair, for God helps us, He manifestly comes to the help of this unhappy soul ; in each letter I can trace an improvement in her disposition, a revival of faith, her heart leaning more towards Heaven, and that gives every hope. Each morning she repeats a prayer to the Virgin that I have sent her. “At eight o’clock,” she tells me, “we shall be together before

God." For at that very hour I offer up the same prayer for her, and with deep confidence. The Holy Virgin who has healed you can heal her too. There lies my hope, and my remedies. . . . In Heaven, in Heaven! Ah! what do we find here on earth? We can only bring sorrow on each other.

Then she asks me for a little poetry, and I am going to give her some, I grant everything to the sick. It is in order to set it to music, a still closer union between our souls, the spring and the nightingale, the musician and the poet! It ought to be so, I think. But, alas! it is so long since I did anything; and it is not easy to do well, to reach the beautiful, so high, so far from our poor mind! We feel that it is made for us, that we have been there, that such greatness was ours and we are no longer anything but intellectual dwarfs. Oh! the fall, the fall, everywhere manifest. I would continue if I had not to go and lay the table. Jeanne-Marie is at the fair, happier than . . .

How abrupt. I know not what I wanted to say when I laid down my note-book there. I am going to speak to-night of a letter from Félicité, which says: "Maurice is still coughing." Since then I feel that cough myself, *I have his pain in the chest*. Oh! when shall I be at rest? When shall I be free from anxiety about that precious health and the precious soul, sick also? The one does not depend on you; but certainly the other does, and you always leave me to suffer, to tremble for what interests me. Adieu; good-night, naughty loved one.

May 30th, 1838.—Is it the bouquets that have

attracted so many bees, and turned my room into a hive? Since morning there is nothing but buzzing and humming of wings, which is not unpleasant to me. I love bees and would gladly let them settle in my room, were it not for the sting that spoils the poetic creature. Yesterday I was badly stung : which causes me to keep the bees at a distance, and to remark that the honey-maker is often very naughty.

May 31st, 1838.—Here to-night at my window, to the song of the nightingale, in sight of my acacias, all blossom and perfume, I bid farewell to the month of May, that fair month of flowers and verdure. Alas ! all ended. Close also of Mary's month, that beautiful devotion of springtime.

June 1st, 1838.—I spent the day at Cahuzac.

On my return I found a number of the *Annals of the Propagation of Faith*. Everything written that comes to Le Cayla is an event, above all if its pages are gathered by the saints from all parts of the world.

June 2nd, 1838.—M. Jules de Villefranche has come to see us ; he seems to me to have grown taller, stronger, better than usual, yet with his wonted gentleness. Always gay, talkative, asking for you. The good little youth !

Caro, the darling, has written to Mimi. What pleasure a letter from Paris gives us ! But to learn that you cough, that everyone says so, that it is perhaps worse than they say ; how sad that is ! Then you do not write to me, not a word of so many

confidential matters that we know. Oh ! we are completely severed ! I no longer know anything about you. God knows what it costs me, and how I place this silence in the list of my sorrows ! Poor heart, created for sufferings ! They have their dwelling in it ; it is quite full just now. You are not the only cause ; others arise from different causes that no one suspects, anguish of the soul that suffers sometimes in a strange fashion. God sends these things, permits them to happen for our good. As the saints say, it is fire that purifies and recasts ; I believe it ; we need at times to pass through the crucible again. Someone said to me : “ At such moments, do like St Jerome, write.” Let us write. Poetry is the most engrossing. Suppose I write some.

Mon Dieu, mon Dieu, mon cœur vous adore et vous aime ;

Rien que dire : mon Dieu ! m'est un bonheur suprême ;

C'est le ciel qui sur moi descend,

Et jamais, sous le diadème,

Reine auprès de son roi n'eut un bonheur plus grand.

Vous êtes mon amour, vous êtes ma lumière ;

Un coin pour vous prier me vaut la terre entière ;

Sous votre regard nonpareil,

Mon âme s'ouvre heureuse et fière,

Comme la fleur des champs aux rayons du soleil.

Ah ! que me dites-vous et que vous dit mon âme ?

Que dit le ciel à l'aube et la flamme à la flamme ?

Ah ! que se disent deux torrents ?

Qu'entendit la première femme

Quand vous apparaissiez aux jardins ravissants ?

Oh ! du céleste amour choses inénarrables !
Choses que les mondains peuvent traiter de fables,
 Mais dont le divin Raphaël
 Ferait les tableaux ineffables
Comme ceux qu'il a faits pour exposer au ciel.

Voyez Monique en pleurs et Thérèse en extase,
Thérèse devant Dieu versant, immense vase,
 Versant un océan d'amour ;
 Et, dans le tablier de gaze,
L'aumône se changer en roses chaque jour.

June 4th, 1838.—Flageolet, hautbois, big drum, nightingales, turtle-doves, orioles, blackbirds, finches, grotesque yet beautiful symphony for the moment. It is in honour of the ceremony of dedication, this noisy music of Andillac, that makes itself heard even here and mingles with the music of the birds. At any rate we do not lack concerts in our rustic surroundings ; you love those of Paris and yet cannot always go to them, and I without going find myself present. We have it all round, from all the trees come the voices of the birds, and my charming musician, the nightingale of the other evening, still sings near the walnut tree in the garden. These have a charm for me, a delight that I cannot find words to express. Thus someone once said to me, " You are born for a country life." It is true, I feel that my nature harmonises with the flowers, the birds, the woods, the air, the sky, all that lives in the open air, the sublime or beautiful works of God.

June 5th, 1838.—Alas ! my poor Louise ! I have just been told that her father is dying, or dead.

Érembert, who was at Gaillac on receipt of this news, saw Charles posting off. The good friend we are losing! the worthy man! I am going to write to Louise.

A new book sent by Louise, the *Meditations* of Father Judde for nuns, a highly esteemed work. I have long been wishing for it.

June 7th, 1838.—M. de Bayne is certain to die to-day. One more beautiful soul in Heaven. He had an overflowing faith, his piety showed in all his actions. A man rare also for his qualities of heart; he knew how to be a friend even at the expense of his own interests. His fortune has paid dearly for his devotion more than once.

June 8th, 1838.—Rousou! poor Lili's servant. How pleased I am at this visit! There are sad pleasures, like speaking of the departed, or seeing those they have loved. She brought me a letter from Euphrasie and one from Louise who tells me, "my father is getting on very well." It was almost on the eve of his death. Death comes fast.

"I¹ regard your enthusiasm for ugliness as an extravagance, no matter from what good disposition it may seem to have arisen. The love of beauty is too natural in us for us to pass over all at once to the love of ugliness, unless by a miracle of conversion such as we see in the saints. Sublime transformation, revelation of divine beauty that enchants the soul, and makes it forget all earthly beauty, even hate that of the body as a cause of sin. What purification!

¹ Extract from a letter to Madame A. de M***.

what severance from the promptings of the flesh ! Which of us women has reached that point ? Even I who am not pretty cannot desire to be ugly. You see how far I have got with my 'sublime meditations,' they have not been able to raise me above vanity. Oh ! do not let us speak of contemplation ; that is the condition of the blessed, of Heaven. As for us poor sinners, it is much if we can bow down before God to lament our sorrows and to confess our sins. To raise one's self up is beautiful, but to look into one's heart is very useful. We see what goes on within us, a knowledge indispensable to our spiritual affairs. . . . There is an ideal side to piety which fills the mind with thoughts of Heaven, of angels, and seraphic ideas, without leaving anything to the heart, without turning it to love or to practising the law of God. But for that, though we were to speak the language of angels, we would be but *sounding brass and tinkling cymbals*. That passage of one of the gospels has always struck me, made me fear to speak of piety without having sufficient of it in the heart. But you assure me always that my letters do you good, which encourages me, makes me think that it is God's will that I should write to you, and makes me happy in the belief that I am doing you good.

Even the throne has had its saints. We have only to think of St Louis to believe in the most difficult salvation. I delight above all in reading the story of his sister, the thrice happy Isabelle, so humble amidst her grandeur, caring so little for pleasure, so innocent and penitent giving to the poor what she received for her luxuries, the delight

of her royal brother and his court by her sweetness and winning qualities that made her lamented by all, when she retired into meditation in her house of Sainte-Claire at Longchamps, to die. Noble and stirring examples of what grace can effect in hearts that are well disposed, of the triumphs of faith over the world ! In the case of salvation, will is power, according to the motto of Jacotot. What sort of man was this Jacotot ? Doubtless a man who understood the power of will, that lever that can raise man to Heaven.

You are right in saying I am born to live in the country. That is my place ; elsewhere I should be less happy perhaps. I recognise in this the care of Providence, which in all its works shows its love for its creatures, and does not cause the violet to grow up in the streets of a city. You see me now leaning on my window, contemplating all this valley of verdure where the nightingale is singing ; then I am going to look after my chickens, to sew, spin, embroider in the hall with Marie. So from one thing to another the day passes, and the evening comes without any tedium."

My dear Maurice, now for you ! no, not yet ! someone is coming in. How many threads broken ! Half of the one above is already far away ; I would not take it up again but for a scrap of poetry which I am sending and wish to leave for you. But first, Lucie, my god-daughter's lesson.

Some trouble since that lesson. My dear little dog, my pretty Bijou is ill, so ill that I fear he will die. Poor beast ! how wretched he is, how he

groans, licks my hands and says to me, " Help me ! " I know not what to do for him, he will take nothing but a few drops of syrup that he licks off my fingers ; that is how I feed him, half sugar, half caresses. Alas ! what does love avail ? I shall not save him. That would make me weep, if I did not repress my tears. It is foolish to weep for an animal, but the heart oftens lacks both sense and pride. Then my Bijou is so pretty, so graceful, so dear and precious, coming, as it does, from Lili ! A dog is so gay, affectionate, so tender, so much our own ! I believe I shall weep, but it will be here in my room where things are secret.

One of my friends asked me once to pray for her sick dog ; I laughed at her and thought her devotion misplaced. To-day I would do the same as she did, and no longer look upon that request as so strange : so much does the heart change the mind ! I did not love Bijou then ; my conscience is not offended at the thought of praying God to preserve an animal. Is there anything unworthy in these creatures, and cannot we beg from Him the life of those we love ? I am inclined to believe it, and that we can ask all things, except what is evil, from God, *le Bon Dieu*. That familiar and favourite name of the Deity inspires every confidence in me. It is far from that to the Supreme Being, as far as from Rose Drouille to Voltaire. But what avails the faith of philosophers when we are unhappy ? What are we to expect from an inaccessible Being, so far off, so far from man that we cannot love Him and adore Him at the same time, and the heart, nevertheless, longs to love what it adores and adore what it loves ; which

happens when God has revealed Himself to us in the flesh and dwelt among us. From that infinite condescension spring our faith and confidence. If you knew all that one asks and sometimes receives ! Miracles prove it. I believe in the miracles of healing, and in others well authenticated, like those of which Saint Augustine and Bossuet speak of, or those we witness in our own time. Now I must return beside my poor Bijou, who surely has led me far from the point where I began.

July 1st, 1838.—My poor little dog is dead. I am grieved and have little inclination to write.

July 2nd, 1838.—I have just laid Bijou in the box-wood warren, among the flowers and birds. I shall plant a rose-bush there, which shall be called the Dog's Rose-bush. I have kept the two little front paws, laid so often on my hand, my feet and my knees. How charming he was, so graceful in his positions, both when resting and when caressing me ! In the morning he came to the foot of my bed to awaken me by licking my feet, then he went to do the same to Father. We were his two favourites. All that comes back to me now. Things of the past come back to the heart. Father misses him as much as I. He says he would have given six sheep for that dear pretty little dog. Alas ! everything must leave us, or we it.

I have just received a letter that causes me still more sorrow. The affections of the heart are as different as their objects. What a difference between my grief for Bijou and that I feel for a soul that is

lost, or, at least, in danger ! Oh ! Heaven ! how impressive and dreadful that is in the sight of faith !

July 6th, 1838.—Still more breaks, interruptions to my writing. For three days I have not laid down my needle. First it was a child's dress we were making, a pretty little pink frock that I have sewn with pretty thoughts. Childhood with its adornments is so charming ! Such pretty curls will fall over the bodice, such round, white arms will fill these sleeves, such pretty hands will come out of them, and the child is so pretty and is called Angèle ! It is with the greatest delight that I have worked for her.

But to-day I grew weary of mending the old linen ; I had neither heart nor spirit for the needle, I thought mournfully of you. Alas ! we have received your letter full of bad news. That long-awaited vessel brings only grief and disappointment. Caro must be very vexed and wretched at seeing your marriage thus rendered uncertain. Perhaps you will not have the means to marry. Your whole existence hinges on this question : so Father has weighed it maturely. His letter will tell you his views. You could not believe how much this uncertainty of your fate engrosses my thoughts. I do not say overwhelms me, for I rely on Providence. How often I have offered God all my happiness for yours ! If only my prayer were heard, if some day you said to me, "I am content !" I thrill at the idea of that happiness that I might see ; and if I should not see it ! . . .

July 7th, 1838.—Nothing done this morning except that I went to mass, and I have been writing almost

all day, to you, Raynaud and Caroline. How many thoughts and ideas issue from the brain, and yet how many remain ! Your future takes up my thoughts so much ! All last night I seemed to see you, and hear your voice, always unhappy, bemoaning the severed ties. It will not be so, I hope. Caroline and her aunt wrote yesterday ; nothing good or hopeful. Disappointments, nothing but disappointments in their letters. How all that grieves us ! if you only knew, my friend ! I have written to you also to-day, and am telling you things that it is needless to repeat here. By the time you read this diary, all will be decided. Will it be good fortune or bad ? God knows. All human judgments are liable to error.

July 9th, 1838.—First day of harvest. Nothing in the country is so pretty as these fields of ripe corn, bright with gold. And when the wind blows, the ears waving to and fro give from a distance the appearance of ripples ; the large north field is a sea of yellow. Every moment Father is to be seen at the hall window contemplating his fair harvest. Sweet joy of the husbandman !

July 10th, 1838.—I have done some spinning and read one of Bossuet's sermons. We have the continuation ; but you are not there to help me to notice the beautiful passages. So I gather what I can. If you wrote to me, I would be less distressed about you, I would do everything with much more pleasure : trouble in the heart is a leaven that embitters everything. So it is with my life since I have suffered on your account. How I long to be

delivered from this anxiety ! How often I say to God, "If it is possible, take from me this cup of bitterness !" Yes, my friend, I push it away and I take it back ; sometimes I see you happy, sometimes wretched. I wish and again I do not wish for your marriage. Let God's will be done ! The human will must lose itself in His, otherwise, there is no peace, or light or security. Lucie, my god-daughter, who is free of such cares, is waiting for her lesson.

After that, there occurs to me a thought from the sermon on *Honour* that I have read, and I wish to record it here ; it is on the subject of human vanity and all that follows from it : "Lord or count, though he be, over and over again, possessor of so much wealth, master of so many subjects, minister of so many councils, and all such things ; yet though he multiplies his greatness to any degree he pleases, there is ever wanted to cast him down but one single death. But he does not think of it, and, in that boundless expansion that our vanity pictures to itself, he never dreams of measuring himself by his coffin, which, nevertheless, alone measures him truly." What a man ! bringing everything to the coffin. None could rival Bossuet in rendering death impressive and solemn : he startles you.

I am off to the hall to join Father. I was writing amidst the piping of the young chickens which are picking the grass under my window, and the joyous cries of the reapers in the hemp-fields. Happy people who sing at their toil !

July 11th, 1838.—The pretty sights that are to be seen in the fields, sights that have just met my

eye. A beautiful field of ripe corn full of reapers and sheaves, and amidst these sheaves one standing by itself, shading two little children, and their grandmother, who is giving them their breakfast of milk.

July 12th, 1838.—What shall we have for this page to-day? There has been nothing but the song of the grasshopper. Let us wait till evening.

Evening twilight.—I am writing with a cool hand, having just come from washing my dress at the brook. It is pretty to wash, to watch the things that pass, the fish, waves, blades of grass, leaves, fallen flowers, and to follow these and what not as they thread their way down the stream. So many things occur to the washer-woman who can look into the current of the brook! It is the bathing place of the birds, the mirror of the sky, the image of life, a *flowing road*, the well of baptism.

July 16th, 1838.—A little calm at last! A little hope about your marriage. Mlle. M*** has written to us of some circumstances that are likely to decide the matter. I see in it the prospect of happiness, a life that commences well; that makes us all glad. No one at Le Cayla these last three weeks but was grieved. The pain of a member extends to the whole body. How different I feel my heart! It has lost that vague feeling of bitterness that spoilt all my pleasure in thinking and speaking of you. I have had occasion to notice how a name pronounced or thought of brings sadness or joy. A grasshopper is singing in the hall; to-day there is an air of gaiety everywhere. I must write to Antoinette. Misy has

bid me tell him of the arrival of Philibert's wife. Poor cousin from Ile de France, she has come to seek a home with her parents. Her son is to be sent to you. It seems as though his father were with him, and recommended him to our care. I shall write you soon about this dear little child.

Do not suppose it is amusing to write to a grand vicar, as it is to write in my little book, or to Louise, or Caro, or my friends. These affectionate letters issue ready made from the heart; but the other has been a work of necessity, and nothing is so tiresome as this labour of the mind, the clear and exact expression of positive facts. Nothing has ever cost me such pains. I cannot write except when I know what I am going to write; something inspires you then: the pen puts it on paper, and that is all. But the affairs of the parish are not dealt with in this way. At last it is done, in spite of myself. This shows me that will and patience accomplish all things. I have also spared Father a tiresome application; it was concerned with some business between Alos and Andillac.

To refresh myself, I have just been resting my head on a sheaf down there in Délerue's field at Sept-Fonts, among shepherds and cows, with little Estève chattering to me. He was speaking to me of his alphabet, for he goes to school and fancies himself the most learned of all. "I am leaving them all behind!" Guileless pride of six years which is likely to grow. That child is really very superior to the others, but what will become of this misdirected intelligence? It is the way of developing it that makes the man. How many great rogues have in

them the stuff that would make great men ! Poor little Toinou, who will turn out a rascal ! If I could I would take him away from his father.

July 20th, 1838.—A mixed sort of life, Martha and Mary. After the mass I heard for the anniversary of our grandmother, I started to sew kitchen aprons, and mend a pair of Érembert's trousers, all that mingled with various reading, history and poetry, that Greek poetry of André Chenier, of which I love *The Beggar* and *The Sick Man*. — Caroline's bouquets ! I hear them in the hall. I am flying there.

They are charming, our bouquets for the Virgin. Charming Caroline ! How I wish she were here that I might kiss her ! A letter from Marie, from Gabrielle and from M. Périaux, all at the same time. What a lot of things for one day at Le Cayla ! So my heart is full, quite full of flowers, of friendships, of pious thoughts for that good Norman curé who speaks to me in so kind and holy a fashion. He speaks to me about Lili, and there is death even amidst these scanty joys ! Now I am thinking of that poor cousin, who nevertheless is in Heaven, as M. Périaux says we must hope. He can feel assured, he who guided her, who understood her nature, white as a lily.

July 21st, 1838.—A long letter to Euphrasie, that is my first pleasure this morning ; now let us go and wait for some more in the hall. What can come to-day ? I hardly know and yet I hope ; it is ignorance that gives the charm to happiness ; so true is it that

God has made paradise a mystery for us. Those who want to understand everything know not what happiness is.

What has happened? Nothing but the sound of the flails falling with measured beat on the threshing-floor. Their cadence mingled with the cries of cocks and grass-hoppers lends that rustic air that I love so much.

July 22nd, 1838.—Oh! joy, joy! a letter from Raynaud which settles your marriage, and asks Father to let me go to your wedding. I am very much afraid I shall not be able to enjoy that beautiful day; but provided it comes, and I am certain of your bliss, though I see it from afar, I am content, and thank God with all my soul. I shall not forget that it is the day of Saint Madeleine that brought this hope; how sweet it is after the bitterness of the past! Maurice, dear brother, how I feel that I am a sister at this moment and for ever! This written, my little diary goes into the drawer under my table, and I to ***to-morrow morning. I should like to take it with me, but where should I keep it there? I shall take notes in my heart and then we can put it here. Adieu, *au revoir*, Maurice and paper. What a pity to leave you!

July 30th, 1838.—Here I am after eight days, after a fall, after being in the very grip of death and at the mercy of God. Oh! it is God who has saved me, whose will it is that I should remain here on earth, beside Father, in my little room now to write to you and to many others, to make of my life some-

thing good, kind and useful, all that I can. I have told you in a letter about my adventure this morning. At present I want to express my delight at coming at last to Paris, no, not to Paris, to your marriage, that is what I am coming to see ; that comes first by far in my heart.

What a man Hugo is ! I have just been reading something of his : he is divine, he is infernal, he is wise, he is crazy, he is people, king, man, woman, painter, poet, sculptor, he is all things ; he has seen everything, done everything, felt everything ; he surprises me, repels me, captivates me ; though I scarcely know anything of him, except *Cromwell*, some prefaces, *Marie Tudor*, and a little of *Notre-Dame*. I shall go and see this Notre-Dame at Paris. How many things for me to see when I issue forth from my wilderness !

August 8th, 1838.—Françoise, M. Limer's sister, came to see me in my more than solitary solitude, since Mimi is not here ; she is at Gaillac, dear sister. And whilst waiting for her return, I was delighted that Françoise came to fill part of the gap ; she was our company on Sunday, pretty, mirthful and gay. I found her a little changed. Time, Oh ! time ! It is two years since she left us, since she lost her brother, who was drowned ; and there was a cousin, a tall handsome young man, whom she saw reduced to a wreck, wasted away with suffering, whom she nursed for three months night and day. Poor dear girl, that is what has aged her. Now she is going into a convent, to dedicate her life, full of trials and shorn of its brightness, without joy in this

world. Thus women find consolation, glad at the thought that God has vouchsafed them happiness in Him. I have just written her a long letter about the matter. This is how by busying myself with the retiral of others into convents, I return again to the idea, and repeat to myself that they will go to God, and I into the world, as St Bernard's little brother said to his brethren who were setting out for Cîteaux. Already a goodly number of our acquaintances have left us in this way. Now, lest I forget, I am going to relate an inspiration of night that I found right in the daylight.

On entering my room at ten o'clock to-night I was struck by the white light of the moon which with its round orb was rising behind a clump of oaks at Les Mérix; there it is rising ever higher and higher each time that I look. It moves faster in the sky than my pen over this paper, but I can follow it with my eyes; wonderful faculty of sight, so exalted, so extensive, so full of enjoyment! We can enjoy Heaven when we will; even at night from my bedside I perceive through a chink in the shutter a little star which is framed there about eleven o'clock, and shines on me long enough for me to fall asleep before it has gone past; so I call it the star of sleep, and I love it. Is it possible that I shall see it in Paris? I feel that my nights and days will be changed, and I cannot think of it without pain. Dragging myself from here is like dragging Paul from his cave; it would only be for your sake that I forsake my wilderness, you for whom God knows I would go to the end of the world. Adieu to the moonlight, to the song of the crickets, to the *glouglou* of the brook; I had the nightingale

as well a moment ago ; but some one of our delights is ever missing from the number. Now, nothing more but God, prayer and sleep.

August 9th, 1838. — Do you know what is weighing on my spirits just now ? I am thinking about Lady Jane Grey, that poor little queen executed so young, so charming, so sweet.

August 10th, 1838. — I have company in my little room, a partridge with a broken wing, but still quite nimble, and very lively and nice ; it steals like a rat into all the corners of its prison, and is growing so tame and so used to the sight of me that it eats and drinks at my side. I should like to take it to Charles.

Feeling a little out of sorts I lay down on your bed, that bed where you lay six months in a fever, where I saw you so pale, worn-out and dying, and from which God has raised you by a miracle. All these thoughts lay down with me on that bed ; these pictures have passed and repassed before my eyes, I have meditated in a spirit of gratitude ; then I fell asleep for a little and dreamt that I was alone in a desert between a serpent and a lion. Fear woke me up. Never had I seen any lion but that, but it certainly was one. How is it possible for us in our sleep to conjure up such creatures of our brain, we who could not create an atom ? Is it a reflection of the divine power that then passes into our soul ? I lie down after having written one letter and received two from Louise, my poor Louise, so loving, so lovable, so sad since the death of her father. “ I am not one of those,” she tells me, “ who are soon con-

soled, I weep only the more, and wish to weep the more ; but I mingle you in my tears." Dear Louise ! Mimi writes also from Gaillac that she has seen the picture, that the infant Jesus is very good ; the Virgin's eyes are thought to be rather curious, and the colouring too bright ; they forget that it is painted for a high and dark place.

August 12th, 1838. — Oh ! the Virgin, the Virgin ! She is in the dining-room, displayed on the side-board ; the whole household is there, Jean, Jeannot, Paul, the shepherd and other adorers, like those of Bethlehem. So the infant Jesus smiles on them, resting divinely on the bosom of His mother. Oh ! He is lovely, this little Jesus, delicate, pretty, celestial ; I delight in looking at Him, sometimes near, sometimes from a distance, from all points, in all lights. I do not think this ought to be displayed in the bright light of a dining-room ; these holy figures are made for the dim, mysterious light of a church.

August 13th, 1838. — One joy after another ; another letter from Caroline : more kind words, no end of affection, for Father, Éran, Mimi, and us all ; a box of things for us. Dear, dear sister, may God repay her in blessings all she does for us, all I feel in my heart for her ! My friend, how I love her ! that charming sister, how I love her ! how I should like to hold her in my arms !

August 14th, 1838. — Only one word, because I am tired, and must sleep, and would not sleep if I

wrote ; and I am worn out, body and soul. Letters from Caroline, Louise, Irène, Mimi. My heart is full. Good night !

August 15th, 1838. — I thought I was going to die last night : a sinking faint feeling, a palpitation of the heart just after I fell asleep. I shook myself, ran towards the window, to the fresh night air which revived me. That gained for me the pleasure of enjoying the beautiful sky for a moment, those beautiful stars that I was on the point of going to see up there ; then I went back to bed with serious thoughts of death, that death that comes we know not when. Let us be ready.

August 16th, 1838. — The beautiful benediction . . . (No ink !)

August 17th, 1838.—Ink at last ! now I can write : ink ! joy and life. I was dead for the three days I lacked the circulation of that blood, dead for my diary, for you, for our confidences. My friend, my heart is full of you, of Caro, of your happiness, that box, these dresses, these bonnets with flowers, these white gloves, these little shoes, these openwork stockings, this embroidered underskirt. Oh ! I see all these, I touch them, I wear them, I have dressed myself with them in thought a hundred times within an hour of their arrival. Oh ! my good, charming sister ! what a treasure India had in this gift, bestowed upon you by God ! What kindness of heart, what delight in giving others pleasure ! Never was a wedding gift given with more joy or received with

more gratitude ; my gratitude overflows and I cannot find words ; these are things that God sees and knows. I ask from Him, the Author of all blessings, eternal happiness for her. I shall feel very happy in my finery, although my well-being does not lie in such things ; but in these there is something sweeter and prettier than the mere appearance, something more than for one's vanity, it is the gift of your betrothed, it is a dress she gives me as a sister. I wrote to her the moment I had seen them, without waiting any longer. My heart is eager to express its gratitude ; I want her to know at once the joy she has given me and all the others with her altar flowers, her cloth, her Virgin, her dresses, and so many beautiful and delightful things. How I love her ! God bless her ! God, who does not fail to reward the giving of a cup of water.

This is what came to us from Gaillac with the ink, a letter from Mimi, some pepper and some oil, and nothing else worth telling you. I add also that Éran has killed a hare and a partridge, and has brought me in two quails, alive but hurt. Whatever is in pain I look on as my own, and always have done. As a child I used to take possession of all the lame chickens ; to do good, to relieve suffering is a deep pleasure, the marrow of a woman's heart.

I finish as I commenced, with that benediction of animals on Saint Roch's day, a ceremony so holy, so impressive for those who can see in it the goodness of God in surrounding man with so many creatures for his service. It is a true picture of the creation, this gathering of animals, all, even to the pig. I thought of Bijou for whom I would have asked a blessing.

(No date.)—Yesterday being Sunday, I spent the day at church or on the roads, and as I went on my way, I thought of the hermit and the angel counting his steps, a story that I recall from the reading of my childhood, one which returns to me in my solitary walks. In the Garenne-au-Buis, at Sept-Fonts where we have been together, I imagine myself attended by this celestial companion.

August 20th, 1838.—Mimi, Lucie, Amélie, her cousin, Fontenilles, all these people entering the dining-room together, drag me from here. I must go to the kitchen, to the drawing-room, to some little chickens, just hatching, who keep me busy; that is more than enough to keep me from writing. I shut up my diary in the cupboard.

Ten o'clock at night.—I am watching such a pretty sight that I cannot help telling you of it: our young ladies are over there by the brook, singing, laughing, showing here and there under the clumps of trees, like nymphs of the night, by the light of some burning matches carried by Jeannot, their moving beacon; they are catching crayfish, a sport that Érembert wished to provide for these young girls, who find amusement in everything. I preferred to be here watching them and telling you about it. I hear peal after peal of laughter; that age is perpetual joy. As for myself I require to rest, to lie down instead of roaming over the cold grass by the brook. Adieu, Maurice; we talked much about you when we were showing the wedding presents. I would rather not leave you, but I must. I could easily spend the

night here describing what is to be seen and heard in my dear little room ; what visitors I have, little insects black as night, little butterflies, spotted and striped, fluttering madly round my lamp. There is one getting himself burnt, another taking his departure, another arriving, another coming back again, and on the table something like a moving grain of sand. How many inhabitants in this small space ! A word, a look at each, a question about their family, their life, their country, would lead us to infinity : It is better to say my prayers here before my window, before the infinity of the sky.

August 22nd, 1838.—Madame and Monsieur de Faramond, a letter from Louise, one yesterday from Antoinette, pleasure and joy. To-morrow I set out with these girls. Adieu, my diary ; but perhaps I shall take it with me, so that I may be beside you.

August 25th, 1838.—Oh ! the old châteaux, with their great halls, their ancient furniture, their wide windows, through which the whole sky is to be seen, the portraits of fair ladies and great lords, there is a strange charm in seeing all those things, in wandering from room to room. Oh ! I love the old châteaux, and I have been indulging myself for a day in this pleasure. I am writing to you from Montels, in a secluded room where by good luck I have found some ink ; I had forgotten to take any with me, and it was a great hardship not to be able to record all the pictures that arose in my mind in this congenial abode. And there is always the added charm that at each of these places there are memories of child-

hood, and you know how delightful that past is. I was nine years old when I first came to Montels. On arriving I recognised the church again under its great elm where I used to go and skip in the shadow, then the great court and the small one with its well, the glass door of the drawing-room, and in that drawing-room the tall beautiful ladies that I liked so much to look at ; one side by side with a friar deep in meditation, a contrast I had never remarked so much as now. In our childhood the consequences of reflection affect us little. We go out, we run about, we roam to and fro in the woods, the avenues of splendid chestnuts, the wide meadows. Delightful country life if we were less lonely : our party here is composed of Madame de Paulo, her daughter, Louise de Thézac and I, with little Henri into the bargain to amuse us. A child at any rate makes some noise, and the inside of the old château needs it to keep away the ghosts, sorcerers and all our fears. There is more than one legend of this sort about the château. Once upon a time a certain nun. . . .

They have taken away my inkpot, and so cut short my ghost-story. Here is a legend to take its place :

LA BALLADE DES MONTAGNARDS .

Chères sœurs, un *De profundis* :
La cloche sonne pour ma mie ;
Elle a quitté sans moi la vie,
Pour s'envoler au paradis.
Le paradis vaut bien la terre
Où l'on n'éprouve que chagrin :
Cloche, sonne pour ma bergère,
Tu sonneras pour moi demain.

J'ai vu rouler le météore ;
Ma pastourelle, était-ce toi ?
Serais-tu condamnée encore
A souffrir à cause de moi ?
J'ai vu le soir sur la fougère
Danser, aux tremblantes clartés
De la céleste messagère,
La plus légère des beautés.

Lise, j'ai cru te reconnaître.
Hélas ! à cette heure peut-être
Tu payais d'un affreux tourment
Des jouissances d'un moment !
Cloche, sonne pour ma bergère,
Du ciel ouvre-lui le chemin ;
Appelle, appelle à la prière
Tous ceux à qui Lise fut chère
Et pour terminer ma misère,
Cloche, sonne pour moi demain.

Si malgré ma douleur amère,
Lise, je ne te suivis pas,
C'est que tu n'avais pas de mère
Pour prier après ton trépas ;
Mais aussitôt que de la terre
Ton âme aura pris son essor,
A l'instant où le grand saint Pierre
T'ouvrira son royaume d'or,
Venez, venez à la prière,
Redira la cloche au passant.
Vous priiez hier pour la bergère,
Aujourd'hui priez pour l'amant.

Il disait, et l'heure dernière
Vint le guérir de son chagrin.
Et j'entendis sa pauvre mère
Dire à son tour dans sa misère :
Cloche, sonne pour moi demain.

Charles, Charles arriving from Paris. Everybody is running about. I shall get news of you. No letters, you are very naughty not to write to me, to me who write to you from everywhere.

August 30th, 1838.—News, letters: Mimi and Father have written to me, and my friend de Maistre; Étienne brings all this, and is taking me away to-night to Rayssac. Dear Louise will be surprised and delighted to see me.

September 4th, 1838.—At Rayssac for the last four days, amidst all the delights of friendship and mountains. Chatting with Louise, walking here and there, have taken up my time so much that I have written nothing for you. I have only answered Marie, that other friend who makes me look upon Les Coques as another Rayssac. I notice many points of resemblance between Louise and Marie: the same eager and lofty temperament, the same devotion, the same strong and high intelligence, the same affection for me. To be loved by them. Oh! to what do I owe this happiness?

An excursion, a pilgrimage, half on horseback, half on foot, to Saint-Jean de Jeanne, a little church nestling at the foot of the mountains like a hermit's cell in Lebanon. There we found a pretty statue of the Virgin and a picture of St John, full of expression and character. It is rather uncommon to find such a beautiful work in the country. Here the houses are poor and the churches rich; faith makes it plain to these profoundly religious people that it is better to decorate the house of God than the house

of man, the eternal abode rather than the abode of a day. In these mountains and valleys where the imagination takes such delight, I found also some memories of the heart, roads where you passed three or four years ago. How many journeys since then !

September 5th, 1838.—Do not write at night if you wish to be read. I notice this morning some of my last night's scrawls, but between us anything will do. You will excuse that bad writing just as I excuse your not writing to me, a much worse thing in my opinion. In reading *Picturesque France* I have discovered that Nivernais was inhabited in the time of Cæsar by the Vadicasses and the Roji, that the people of Nièvre are hospitable, that among the antiquities they have observed a queen's statue with a goose's foot, and in a marble quarry at Clamecy a woman's hand of which the bones were turned into turquoises. Then there is the poet Adam Billaut of Nevers. Here I am encamped in Marie's country, I shall be the first to speak to her of it. It is for that I have taken these notes. Always some sentimental interest in what we say and do.

Had it not been for Louise who alights on me while I am writing, like a butterfly on a flower, I should have gone on writing something or other, but it would not have been so precious as this talk with my friend, these little confidences between two hearts, spoken in a whisper, things that are so precious for friendship. It is you I am thinking of now, you ill, pale, dying, consumed with fever, and cured and restored on this day September 8th, as if by a miracle,

a real miracle ; and as to-day is the anniversary I am going to church to offer up thanks to God.

A pitiable sight, a poor crazy woman, rushing into the church like a whirlwind, throwing herself on her knees before the tabernacle, where she sang a hymn to the Eucharist. It was touching, this religious mania, this frenzied passion for God, the one love of the poor mad-woman. At all events she will be glad one day, when her reason is restored to her in Heaven, and shows her that the supreme wisdom is to love what she loved in her madness. So many other deranged minds will be less fortunate. This subject would carry me far, I must go and make the acquaintance of Madame de Bayne and her party who are arriving from Toulouse.

She is a good sweet little woman, but silent and shy, who only lets one guess the good qualities of her heart and mind, and all the accomplishments she possesses. She paints, draws, plays, does a good deal of embroidery, and thus charms the rusticity of the mountains. This is a new abode for her, and the change from the fashionable world to the wilderness would be rather strange, were it not that she has within herself qualities that smooth the abrupt transition. These at any rate are the reflections that suggested themselves to me regarding the position of this young woman, who comes almost from the court, for she has just arrived from Austria, where M. de Montbel is in attendance on the princes. This contrast of the past and present is to me very striking.

Louise tells me that where the others see nothing I find much to say. "Come," she said to me, "you would say a hundred things about that." It was a

door-latch she raised as she went away. Assuredly there is much to be thought and said about this piece of iron that so many hands have touched, that has been raised with so many different emotions, looks, during so many days, years, lives of men. Oh ! the history of a latch would be a long one.

I leave to-morrow. Poor Louise, how many regrets now ! Sorrow is the end of all things. A week ago all was delight. All delight, no, for mingled with it was a shade of sorrow ; we always thought of her poor father, we spoke of him ; I have seen too well how much he is missed at Rayssac, that kind M. de Bayne, good, gentle, and never at a loss for something to say. I approached this house as I would a cemetery, with sadness and regret. Then company, walks and conversation diverted my thoughts. The hues of the soul change and fade into one another like those of the sky.

September 12th, 1838.—At seven o'clock I kissed her and left her weeping in her bed. How much friendship in that adieu, that pressure of the hand, that "*come back*," that voice choked with tears ! Poor dear Louise, I had the courage to leave her without weeping. I do not understand myself, I do not think myself hard-hearted, and yet I do not break down on these occasions. But what does that matter ? I can love as tenderly as another ; what comes from the heart is as precious as what comes from the eyes. But Louise with her soft heart loves and weeps. She was grieved to part with me, because she needs a friend, and tells me all her troubles, her future, her plans, perhaps her illusions. Women have always some.

(No date).—Visits, sounds of the hunt at Le Cayla, and we working with Euphrasie in the niche of one of the dining-room windows. I love thus to sit apart and listen to others talking a little way off, throwing in a word from time to time to keep my share in the conversation. I am so busy getting ready my small wardrobe for travelling that there is no chance either to read or write. But I am coming to Paris in a fortnight !

September 19th, 1838.—To-day there came to Le Cayla a young child, very interesting, full of winning ways, of memories, and of misfortunes, the youngest daughter of our cousin in Ile de France. I cannot look on her without deep emotion, so much does she awaken in me affections and regrets. I think of her poor father, so lovable, so accomplished ; who loved me so much, his daughter tells me. Poor little dear, how sweet she is with her vivacity, her cleverness, the graces of a girl of fourteen, and something foreign in her face and accent that adds still more to her charms ! Her little brother is also very nice, and quite contented at his school. He is only nine years old, and feels the value of education. Both are as ignorant as creoles. “Over there,” they say, “we did nothing but play, but in France we must know many things, otherwise people would laugh at us.” As long as he lived, my cousin sent them to school ; after his death, his widow took them away, for lack of money, no doubt. But now they have all they want in France, with their relations at Lagardelle and their father’s brothers. So Providence comes to the help of us all.

Oh ! I am surely a proof of that, I who am going to make this journey, this delightful journey to Paris. I have told you how. Would we ever have thought last year that it would come to this ? I thank God again and again. Father has just gone to Andillac to get my passport signed by the *maire*. A token that we shall see each other. Writing to Marie at Gaillac, to Marie at Les Coques, writing in this book, chatting and talking with Félicie, that is my day. Adieu ; there have been more unhappy ones. This day last year you were so ill.

September 24th, 1838.—No writing, no seclusion here for several days ; people, people, all the countryside to be entertained. There were twelve of us sat down to table to-day, to-morrow there will be fifteen, autumn visits, ladies, hunters, a few curés among them as if to bless the multitude ; the life of a château in the good old times. That would be nice enough but for the domestic turmoil it causes. Ah ! I have had the looked-for visit from the paladin of Rayssac, who has come as envoy extraordinary to bring me a letter and good news with it, a beginning of hope, the approval of a very influential person in the matter. That gives me great pleasure for my friend's sake and his. I know not which interests me most, both lovable, of high character, good and noble-hearted, united through their confidence in me. Oh ! if it were not so late, how many things I would tell you about these two days of the mysterious visit, walks, words dropped in the woods, under the leaves of the vines !

September 28th, 1838. — Nothing since that last

day, not a word written, not any means of telling what has been done, seen and said at Le Cayla and in me. How many people, how many things, visits, laughter, games, farewells, parting wishes for the journey I am to make! One day twelve at table, next day fifteen, people from here, from there. One would imagine there was a general agreement to swoop down in a great swarm on Le Cayla. A large company in the dining-room; harmony everywhere and the gaiety that springs up where there are so many young people. Seven young ladies and as many huntsmen, half on horse, half on foot. A good many of the guests left in the evening, taking with them the young creole girl, the one whose departure I witnessed with most regret. I am very fond of her, and I know not when I shall see her again. The messenger from the mountains had left us in the morning, promising as a means of correspondence a letter from his sister in which he would put a mark if he had good hopes from his parents, otherwise nothing. That *nothing* frightens me.

Evening. — I have just come back from Les Cabanes; Érembert from Gaillac, bringing me the expected letter. No mark. Poor youth! poor girl! there is great trouble in store for them. We have written also to Caroline and you; that is plenty of occupation for heart and pen, but I have not a moment to myself. Your letter to Father made me glad on your account. Dear little room! I must leave you for the night and soon for a long time.

September 29th, 1838.—Adieu, my room, adieu,

my Le Cayla, adieu, my diary, though I am taking it with me, but it will travel in my trunk.

I have come back from a farewell mass that the good pastor has said for me. I have received all the adieus and handshaking from Andillac.¹

¹ From this point there is a gap of six months in the Journal, the book relating to her stay in Paris having been lost.

VIII.

You are witness, O Lord, that nowhere do I find consolation ; in no creature, repose.—*The Imitation.*

NEVERS, *April 10th, 1839.*

Eight days, eight months, eight years, eight centuries, what tedium and weariness without end since I left you, my poor sick friend ! Is he well ? Is he better ? Is he ill ? I keep asking these questions every moment, yet never an answer. Painful ignorance, hard to bear, ignorance of the heart, which alone causes us suffering or adds to our sufferings. The weather is fine, everywhere the sun is felt, and a perfume of flowers that would do you good. The spring and the warmth will do no more to cure you than all medicines. I tell you this in a hopeful mood as I sit alone in my hermit's room, with chair, cross and little table close to the little window where I write. From time to time I look at the sky and listen to the bells, and watch the passers-by in the streets of Nevers the sad. Is it Paris that spoils, diminishes and darkens everything for me ? Never was a city more deserted, black and

tiresome, in spite of *the attractions that reside there*, Marie and her dear family. There is no charm that can overcome a certain influence. Oh! the *ennui*, the most deadly, inveterate, settled *ennui*, that comes in by one door when it is chased out at another, that requires such efforts to prevent its taking complete possession. I have tried everything, even to taking out my distaff from the bottom of its box where I had kept it since my departure from Le Cayla. That reminded me of the shepherd who having risen at court still preserved the box with his crook, and took pleasure in opening it sometimes. I also have enjoyed seeing my distaff again and spinning a little. But I spun so many other things! Lastly the voyage to the Peleu islands, a work as interesting as oakum. I found it useless as an antidote to *ennui*. Let it remain, that inexorable *ennui*, that foundation of human life. To suffer, and to suffer oneself is the wisest thing.

A letter at last! A letter telling that you are better, a letter from your friend who has seen you, spoken to you, found you almost gay. *O res mirabilis!* Gaiety! Provided it is not assumed, that you are not trying to deceive us. Invalids play those tricks sometimes. Why not believe it? Doubt is useless. What makes me esteem your friend, is my confidence in him, for I believe him to be firm in friendship and in speech, a man of truth. I like him, and desire his letters still more because he is nearest to you in intelligence and heart, and I see your image in him.

April 14th, 1839.—A letter from you, one from
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our friend the general, the amiable and charming visitor, who writes to me regretting that he came too late to bid me farewell. I had just started a moment before. I missed seeing him, alas ! and so many other things. This departure, this separation, so unforeseen, so painful in many respects, torments me in heart, mind and eyes, that turn ever towards Paris. But your letter has done me good ; it is still you that I listen to, it is from you I learn that you sleep a little, that your appetite is coming back, that your throat is better. Oh ! God grant that it may be true. How I beg and long and pray for that precious health, of the soul as much as of the body ! I am not sure if these are good prayers that one offers with so much human affection, such seeking to bend God's will to one's own. I want my brother to grow well ; that is the foundation of all I do, but a foundation of confidence, faith and resignation, it seems to me. Prayer is a desire subdued. *Give us our daily bread, deliver us from evil, thy will be done.* Our Saviour, in the Garden of Olives, showed but this spirit of passive submission. This acceptance, this free union of the human will in the divine will, is the most sublime act that poor creatures can accomplish, the complement of faith, the closest participation in the grace that flows from God to man, and works wonders. Hence the miracles of healing, wherein consists part of the power of the saints, who but form one with God, lost in unity, as St Paul says. That is why Marie, pious and loving, is having prayers said for you at Nevers on nine successive days. She has entrusted this care to her saintly father, who is to join his prayers to ours, prayers of a sister and a

friend. A touching proof of the interest he takes, showing the soul of a man among sorrowing women ! I admire the Christian good sense of this family, and the blessings that result from it. How beautiful human society would be if it were composed of that goodness of heart and head I see here !

Les Coques.—Desert, calm, solitude, a return to the life I love. Nevers wearied me with its petty society, its fast women, grand dinners, toilettes, visits and other tiresome things, with no attractions to make up for them. After Paris where pleasure and pain, heaven and earth are at least mingled together, all else is empty. The country, nothing but the country can suit me.

Our party set out from Nevers at midday on Monday, the hour when it is most pleasant to walk in the April sunshine, the softest and most brilliant of all. I gazed with delight upon the verdure of the cornfields, the budding trees, the banks of the ditches carpeted with grass and flowers like those of Le Cayla. Then a mound of violets, a lark who sang as he soared, and vanished from sight, the musician of the troupe.

April 18th, 1839.—I am in the same room that I had last winter, whence I look upon sky and water, the Loire, the long white Loire, that bounds our horizon. That is more pleasing to the eye than the roofs of Nevers. My rustic tastes are at ease here in that immensity : but it is the pleasure of the eyes only. I do not go out, and it is my imagination that, like a bird, takes flight in all directions. I

traverse Bourbonnais and Berry ; I loiter with delight among the mountains of Auvergne, snow-clad on the crests, so fresh, blooming, green and fertile on the slopes. I make for Montaigu, whence we came, and whence so many knights set out for the combats in the Holy Land and other places ; whence the Bishop of Senlis departed to direct the Battle of Bouvines, (some historian of the period says the direction of the battle was due to Guérin, Bishop of Senlis). I traverse the lands and domains of our noble ancestors. I see the sheep-folds and cattle-pens, just as they were then. I see the same streams flowing, the same woods bursting into leaf, the same birds singing : I see everything that was to be seen then, except the masters, the poor wretches at Le Cayla struggling to make both ends meet. Kings have been known to turn schoolmasters. Reverses of fortune have been the lot of every age, every family, and these misfortunes are not the heaviest when we know how to support them.

Evening.—I am feeling ill ; but the loss of appetite which takes away all desire for dinner, procures me the pleasure of remaining here while they dine, the pleasure of solitude with God, my books and you. I have said my prayers, and placed in my writing table the pretty little valise that Valentine gave me, loving and generous like her mother. That child takes very much after her in character, and mind ; I am anxious about her health and her heart, which in Marie's case were both too tender. This box will always afford me pleasure through the memory of the time, the place, so many things, and also by

being a child's gift. Everything that their little hands touch or give has so many charms !

My thoughts have turned to you all day. I have pillaged roses, poppies and marigolds in your Indian enclosure. I have followed gay and sad thoughts, my darling invalid. Oh ! the distance ! "How it pains me to think of my distance from thee !" said a friend to a loved one he had in Heaven. And I, knowing that you are on your bed of sickness. . . .

April 19th, 1839.—I have finished a book that I thought would be more interesting, a novel chosen for its title, *The Poison Chamber*, which seemed to promise something about La Brinvilliers, Louis XIV. and his century. Instead of that, a sorceress, tame toads, many horrible things in infamous places, among princes and princesses. Louis the Great diminished, a little old man under an old woman's thumb, and then the Jesuits and other ill-chosen things ; the Duke of Orleans, Cardinal Dubois, prominent men of the time, of whom the book scarcely describes the point of the nose. I am not fond of prisons. Let us pass on to *Physiology of the Passions* by Dr Alibert.

No *Physiology*, no library key : we have sought for it everywhere, like a golden key. And in truth a book is veritable gold for me, a treasure in our desert, and in the thirst of my soul. Incomprehensible as we are ! nothing can content us ! To live with Marie, in the country, to be with her, seemed to me the height of happiness, and yet I want something else ; Marie, that oriental book with leaves of roses, written with pearls, fails to please me. *At the bottom of all things is found void and nothingness.* How

often I hear that saying of Bossuet ! And this one more difficult still, "Place your joys above created things." It is always there we place them, poor birds, on broken branches, or branches so yielding that they let them sink to the earth.

Oh ! qu'est-ce que la vie ? Exil, ennui, souffrance,

Un holocauste à l'espérance,

Un long acte de foi chaque jour répété !

Tandis que l'insensé buvait à plein calice,

Tu versais à tes pieds ta coupe en sacrifice,

Et tu disais : J'ai soif, mais d'immortalité !

Walked with Marie in the garden, round the little wood. On coming back read the newspaper, danced with Valentine, sang *I met my love on Monday*, while Marie accompanied me on the piano. The day finished, good-night to all, adieu to you.

April 20th, 1839. — No reading, consequently some writing, something which fixes and holds my attention. Working with my hands is not enough ; my fingers are not those clever fairies who enchant some women with embroidery, lace and cutting out, these ten fairies lodged in ten rose-leaves, as some one said about pretty fingers with pink nails. I have neither a rose nor anything else in my hand except a stocking which is slipping from my grasp. Marie is playing the piano in the drawing-room just below, and I feel something in my head which answers her. *Oh ! yes, I have something there.* What is to be done ? Ah ! some trifling work in which I should frame my thoughts, my points of view, my sentiments about some object, would suit me perhaps. I would throw my life

into it, the overflowing of my soul, which would find an outlet in that direction. If you were here I would consult you, you would tell me if I ought to do it, and what I ought to do. Then we should sell that, and I should have the money to come and see you at Paris. *Oh! that is what tempts me still more than glory.* Glory would count for nothing, I assure you, and my name would remain blank. Perhaps we should succeed. To encourage me I have as examples M. Andryane, M. Xavier de Maistre, who have said things that would make my pen start off with joy like an arrow. But what am I to aim at? An object, an object! Let that but come, and I shall be calm and in it I shall find repose.

The bird that seeks its bough, the bee that seeks its flower, the stream that seeks its ocean, fly and hurry to repose. So also my soul flies, my understanding, my God, until it finds its flower, its bough, its ocean. All that is in Heaven, and in an infinitely perfect order; in Heaven, the place of understanding, the intellectual aspirations are amply provided for. Oh! I believe so, I hope so. But for that, existence would be incomprehensible; for in this world, the shadow of the other, only the shadow of happiness is to be seen.

April 21st, Sunday, 1839.—I set out to mass in the hope of finding a letter on my return. On getting back, no letter! and for me everything from here to Paris is letters. I live between two sheets of paper. Outside that nothing interests me to-day. The sun I love, the nightingale that I heard for the first time this spring, M. de Chouland, who seemed to me so

amiable last winter, who has come and is quite the same, none of these give me any pleasure: there are moments when the soul is dead to the world, taking no part in what is going on around it. God sustain me in my struggle with dejection! Courage, courage! I say it thirty times a day, and do I act up to it? I know not.

April 22nd, 1839, on rising.—What will be the events on this date? I merely note it, while I await the postman, pain or pleasure, shadow or sunshine, all the things that make up a day.

Evening.—No letter! the thought that follows me to bed with so many others, sad all of them. *To know nothing*, that is engraved on my heart as if with a knife. What are you about, my poor Maurice? Nineteen days of silence; then you were only a little better, and pain comes and goes quickly! How pleased I am to see that St Theresa, whose *Spirit* I read in bed, had a brother whom she greatly loved, to whom she wrote long and tender letters, telling him all sorts of things about herself and him. A mingling of life, sentiments, ideas which show that saints' hearts are like our own, and that God guides them. Here I am far from the convent of Avila, my thoughts have travelled from Spain to Paris, from St Theresa to another woman, and all this through one word, nothing but a word, a *please* which I met in these letters, and which makes me think of that I heard so often in the Maison Indienne. I hear this unkind *please*, and a whole multitude of ideas, memories, regrets and fears follow it. Oh! the power of a word, of a sound that instantly

changes our soul. And so it is with a sight, an odour. I never can smell eau de cologne without thinking of my mother's death ; for when she was dying some was sprinkled on her bed, quite close to mine. I was awakened to that odour and to the last moments of my mother.

April 23rd, 1839.—Oh ! if I were only nearer, I would know why I do not hear from you. I would go to the *Maison Indienne*, and walk up into your room, I would draw aside the curtains and look into that alcove. . . . What would I see ? Oh ! Heaven knows. Pale, sleepless, speechless, almost lifeless. This is how I picture you to myself, how you follow me about, how I find you in my room where I am alone. Maurice, my friend, Caro, my darling sister, and all you who ought to write to me, why do you not write ? Perhaps you are too ill, Caro too busy ; but your friend, your brother D'Aurevilly, why do they remain silent ? Are you conspiring to break my heart ? Oh ! no ; you do not wish to tell me, you are waiting to give me better news, or your friend is ill, and you, idler that you are, take thought of nothing. Indeed he was suffering from violent headaches, he told me lately, and quite possibly that has turned into a serious illness. I fear, I more than fear that he is ill. Twofold sorrow at present. Poor heart, will not thy burden be too heavy ? Oh ! still another saying of St Theresa, " Either suffering or death ! "

April 24th, 1839. — How gay everything is, how bright the sun, how mild and fresh the air ! A

letter, better news, dear invalid, and all is changed in me, within and without. *I am happy to-day.* So rare a statement that I underline it. At last a letter has come, at last ! I have it there before my eyes, in my hand, in my heart, everywhere. My whole life is for ever in a letter, sometimes sad, sometimes gay. Thank God for the good news I learn to-day of your sleep, your appetite, your walk in the Champs-Élysée with Caro, your angel guide ! Our dear good friend relates that with a loving detail that quite touched me. It is too kind of him to make himself the medium of confidential correspondence between a brother and sister who are thus parted, to minister to my anxieties, to shorten the distance which is abolished when I hear about him. I shall for ever owe an infinite debt of gratitude for this service, for this affectionate devotion of the kindest of friends.

I have had a long talk with Marie about this letter and countless things relating to it. So many associations grow up between different things, that sometimes a hair links the whole world. So we have drawn the past out of the eternity into which it has fallen, to review it once more between ourselves, brought together so strangely.

The beautiful vision, the admirable figure of Christ I perceive on the tapestry opposite my bed ! It is made for the eye of a painter. Never have I seen a more sublime head, one more divinely sorrowful, with the features usually given to the Saviour. I am much struck with it, and I admire also the effect of my candle behind the handle of a water-jug, the shadow of which makes a frame for the three flowers on the tapestry forming the picture. Thus the smallest

things make up the greatest. Some children discovered the telescope, a glass by chance brings the stars close, a dim light and a little shadow on the paper make for me a picture by Rubens or Raphaël. The beautiful is not what we seek, but what we meet with. It is truly beautiful, more beautiful than anything of this kind I have seen at the Exhibition. What angel displayed this image of Jesus for me in my solitary chamber, *for Jesus is sweet to the soul, and with Him it has all it needs, nothing appears difficult*. Ah ! well, may this image be useful to me and aid me in the thought that fills my whole mind. To-morrow I am going to make a pilgrimage for your sake, one that involves a sacrifice not on account of the distance, but for another reason that calls for courage of soul, strength of faith. With God's help I shall have it. Do not think it is any martyrdom ; it only means going to confess to a priest in whom I have no confidence. But he is the only one in the place, and I want to confess for the *neuvaine* we are holding. In this act of piety we must always separate the man from the priest, and sometimes leave him altogether out of account.

Adieu : I am going to sleep with these thoughts, with your memory and so many others.

April 26th, 1839.—Is it possible ? Can I tell it ? Never mind. Everything is put here, everything is told ; it is my depository. Here I leave my laughter and my thoughts. I am laughing at present at a shoe, a magic shoe, more magical than Cinderella's slipper, more full of enchantment than the jewel on Esmeralda's foot, since the pleasure of holding it in

my hands has triumphed over the pleasure of writing to M. Xavier de Maistre.

Ce n'était pas qu'il fût joli,
Qu'il fût brodé, qu'il fût mignon.

It is old, it has lost its shape and its binding, and I have sewn a ribbon round, thinking that this lends it an astonishing charm. Poor shoe, I shall have restored its youth and made it fit to appear again and take its place on the feet it once covered with such elegance, feet that have worn it on delicate carpets of the fine salons, in cathedrals, in the Tuileries, in the fields of Nivernais. Oh ! my shoe ! the story of yourself and all the steps you have taken at Paris would be long ; never would any pages, however much I write, have the same interest or tell me anything so pretty as what I read on your slender soles.

To-morrow I shall write to M. Xavier.

April 27th, 1839.—There was a time a few years ago when the idea of writing to a poet, to a famous man, would have enchanted me. If when I was reading *Prascovie* and *The Leper* I had dreamt that I should see the author and speak to him, I should have been transported with delight. Oh ! youth ! And now I have seen, written and spoken, coolly, without emotion, without pleasure, or, at any rate, with very little, that of curiosity, the least, the last in the scale of sensations. A curiosity, it must be confessed, somewhat disappointed, astonished only to see nothing astonishing. A great man is so much like other people ! Would I have believed that once, that

a Lamartine, or a De Maistre had not something more than human about him ! Such was my simple belief at Le Cayla, but Paris has destroyed that illusion and many others. That is the evil of seeing and living ; for we leave all pretty things behind us. We would give way to regrets, but for a little Christian reason which consoles us for everything ; Christian reason, mark you, for reason alone is too stupid, and is not my philosophy.

A letter from you, a letter of convalescence, of spring, of hope, of something that cheers me, of a life that regains its bloom. Oh ! my friend, how thankful I am to you !

A visit from a lady and her little girl, a young plant somewhat withered, pale and weighed down by a slow fever, by the painful development of life. She is white as alabaster, with a faint red in her lips, dark lines under her eyes, and an air of utter dejection and interesting languor. What a lot of things her grandmother has seen ! These grandmothers are collections of antiquities of every sort.

April 28th, 1839.—*Happy are those who believe without having seen.* Happy then the believers in homœopathic powder ! happy then my stomach, which has just taken some on Marie's prescription ! I have more faith in the doctor than in the remedy, I must say, which comes to the same thing so far as effect is concerned. Though I have urged you to try this new method of cure, it was more for the good effect of a long and gentle course of treatment, than for the infinitely small doses which must produce infinitely little result. What active principle can

one atom of any powder contain, even were it fire? So I have taken it without conviction, and to please my loving friend, who is full of care for my health. My remedy is to do nothing, to leave Dame Nature alone, for, except in acute cases, she gets herself out of the difficulty unaided. Health is like the children, we spoil it by too much care. Many women are the victims of this too loving attention to trifling complaints, and remain sufferers from ailments through having pampered them. Derangements of health that at first are only trifling complaints, become serious maladies, just as we see the weaknesses of the soul become passions when they are over-indulged. So I do not wish to over-indulge my present ailment, and though suffering from my heart and nerves, I wish to read, write and do everything as usual. This expression of determination *I will*, the words of the Master, is of great power, and I am fond of Jacotot's proverb : *Where there's a will there's a way*. Indeed, what a lever ! The man who uses it can lift the world and raise himself to the skies. The noble and holy faculty, that makes great geniuses, saints, heroes of both worlds, superior intelligences.

Read *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, and *Les Savantes*. What a man, that Molière ! I like to read him.

May 1st, 1839.—It is in the sweet air of May, at sunrise of a radiant and balmy day that my pen courses over the papier. It is delightful to roam through this enchanting scene, among flowers, birds and verdure, under the broad blue sky of Nivernais. I love the graceful shape and these little white clouds

here and there like cotton cushions, hung up as a resting place for the eye in that immensity. Our soul expands over what it sees; it changes like the horizons, it takes their form, and I am inclined to believe that man in a small place has small ideas, as well as gay or sad, stern or generous, according to his natural surroundings. Each plant takes after its soil, each flower after its vase, each man after his country. Le Cayla, our beautiful little corner, has kept me long under its verdure, and I feel myself different from what I was then. Marie thinks this is unfortunate, but I do not think so. I have enough left of my own self to go back to the same life. Only there will be a new branch and two plants on the same trunk, just like those trees grafted with various species on which several flowers are to be seen.

This very day, perhaps this instant, the pious Mimi is on her knees before the little altar of Mary's month in my room. Dear sister! I join her and find my little chapel also at Les Coques. I have been given a room to use as a chapel and Valentine has filled it with flowers. I shall make it into a church, and Marie, her little daughters, the servants, the shepherds, and the whole household will meet there every evening before the holy Virgin. They come there at first as if merely to look on. No Mary's month has ever come to them. Some good may result from this inquisitive devotion, were it only one idea, one single idea of their duties as Christians, which these poor people hardly know, but which we shall teach them while we amuse them. This popular devotion pleases me inasmuch

as it is attractive in its form, and thus offers easy means of instruction. Beneath the surface are concealed wholesome truths that issue forth in quite a happy way and gain their hearts in the name of the Virgin and Her sweet virtues. I like Mary's month and the other tender little devotions that the Church permits and blesses, devotions which shoot forth at the foot of faith, like flowers at the foot of the oak.

May 2nd, 1839.—Wrote to Father, to a mother who has lost a daughter. Read Andryane. Walked with Marie. Spoke of our brothers, and came home in a storm; thunder, rain and noise. That is one day gone.

May 3rd, 1839. — I have written nothing, nor had any wish to write, even to you, darling invalid. If it did you any good, if I could address it to you, put it in your hand every day, oh! then nothing would prevent me from writing. But for the future, perhaps for a time that will never come, this discourages me and checks all my enthusiasm. What avail the thoughts I send you, when you cannot read them, when something, I know not what, will separate me from Maurice? For I am very much afraid of returning alone to Le Cayla. I try to banish that thought that for ever recurs to me about your health and so many other obstacles. That longed-for journey seems to me so uncertain, that I no longer count upon it. And Heaven knows when we shall meet again! My friend, must it be that we are to live apart, that this marriage that I built up like a nest for you, where I

should come to be with you, is to leave us more distant than ever ! This is a great sorrow for me, both now and in the future. My wants, my inclinations lean more towards you than any other of our family ; I have the misfortune to love you more than anyone else in this world, and my heart had built the happiness of its old age on you. No longer young, near the end of my life, I fancied myself spending my closing days with Maurice. At every age there is bliss in some great love, the whole soul finds refuge in it. Oh ! so sweet a joy will never be your sister's ! I shall have no outlet but towards God for my love, as I understand it and feel it. Love of the saints so precious, so consoling, so beautiful, making us long to go to Heaven that we might win for ourselves the heart of Theresa, who loved Jesus.

I am off ; I am going to read and assume an apparent calm. O Lord !

May 4th, 1839. — These memoirs of Andryane, which I was told were so interesting, interest me no longer in the second volume. Perhaps it is my own fault, perhaps I am not impressionable. To me these stories of prison life are wearisome, and these chains of events too much drawn out ; still I shall proceed to the end. In every book there is something good ; it is gold dust sprinkled everywhere, according to your expression, better applied than at present. I have seen this Andryane, the Adonis of the Republicans ; I have seen him and I thought his face the best of him.

I spend almost all my time in reading when we are not talking with Marie ; but even with all our talks

and our love, the solitude is too deserted and empty for two women by themselves. Books, then, books! They serve a purpose, they are useful, whatever your friend says, I should not care to burn them. That recalls to me the evening of fanaticism, alas! so far off now.

Happy child! Here comes Valentine delighted at bringing me a cock-chafer. These cries and transports of joy give me pleasure and carry my thoughts back to that age, to these vanished joys. What enthusiasm over a cricket, over a blade of grass!

May 8th, 1839. — The good point in the memoirs of Andryane is the triumph of the soul over adversity, the chains borne so nobly, the Christian in the dungeon, drawing dignity and strength from God; the confession of faith explained with intelligence and feeling, then his sister's journal, full of interest, full of tears. There is something in that book both attractive and edifying.

Waiting for letters, but none have come either for Marie or me; this casts a shadow over the hearts of the two friends, who see everything with the same eyes. I have written to you, begun a dress, and read the first pages of the *Physiology of the Passions*; a beginning which pleases me.

May 9th, 1839.—Have written to the Bishop of Nevers: a letter which at first gave me some trouble, but now affords me satisfaction, because I have gratified someone. This is Ascension day, one of these radiant festivals of the Church that raise up the Christian soul to a world of joys unknown, to the

place where St Paul has seen what the eye has not seen. My friend, one day shall we be there, you, I, all those whom we love? A great and terrible question! And if that be not so, then we have lost all, and life will have been nothing but an illusion! God preserve us from this calamity!

A letter from Caro, our dear sister, who tells me of you; but not enough, without details, without fullest confidence, without that quality which shows us what we do not see, as M. d'Aureville does. So of all the letters his are the ones I prefer, full of you, and of a style that makes them charming.

May 10th, 1839.—Caro's letter has left me anxious and uneasy about that weakness that prevented you from getting up one morning and putting on your boots. What a bad sign that is, and how I long for our friend to send me his report! I shall know then the state of your health, so dear to me. The good and the bad are reported with detail and precision, I see you just as if I were there. My gratitude to him, the devoted friend of my anxiety!

May 11th, 1839.—If I could believe in happiness, M. de Chateaubriand has said, I should place it in habit, *the uniform habit that links one day to another* and renders almost imperceptible the transition from one hour to another, from one thing to another, which shows itself from afar, and arrives without any shock to the soul. There is rest in this measured life, in this order, in this sequence of duties, studies, songs, prayers, relaxations, that the pious impose upon themselves, which come round in due succession

like the links of a revolving chain. They expect nothing, or they know what they expect, these men of habit, and that is so much less anxiety, agitation, and seeking. This doubtless was the happiness of M. Chateaubriand, and his who said with too much indolence, "It seems that on the down of my habits, I need not take the trouble to live." From all that I conclude that it is good to know one's own mind. Marie, with her airy, fluttering imagination, dislikes uniformity and does not understand how I like it. Yet it is true, and I feel crossed and uncomfortable from not doing things according to their time and order. For without order life is a medley out of which comes nothing beautiful, either without or within. Harmony has so many charms! and that is but the agreement of things that attract and follow each other.

The Soap-Bubble, an eastern tale that I have got for Valentine.

May 13th, 1839.—"*The Queen is the perfection of goodness.* In this homage of gratitude, in these words, written in a book, and, it seems to me, on your throne also, there is a gentle encouragement, a charm of hope in your Majesty.

Each Frenchman has his, and for me, Madame, it would be to obtain some gifts for my parish, for our church in its destitution.

The mission of collector was given to me when I came to Paris, and how can I fulfil it better than in making known our needs to one who understands all?

In seeing your rich cathedrals, the imposing Saint-Roch where you were, I thought sadly of our poor

little church, and I promised myself that I would make a request in its name to our pious queen.

I follow this inspiration, sent, I am sure, from God, and I address it to you, Madame, as to Providence, as to the protector of faith and religion in France.

Royal charity would be of great value for us, and would engrave with grains of incense your Majesty's name in the church and in the memory of the parishioners of Andillac.

With their prayer I lay at your feet the sentiments also of their interpreter, of her who has the honour to be, Madame, Your Majesty's most respectful and faithful, etc., etc."

May 16th, 1839. — Riot, blood, cannonading, sounds of death. News come like a thunderbolt into our solitude and tranquil day. Maurice, Caro, my Paris friends, I am in trouble, I see you on the volcano. Oh! Heavens, I have just written to Caro, and am beginning a few words to M. d'Aurevilly, my second brother, by the interest he takes.

May 18th, 1839. — No letter here to-day or yesterday. I have done nothing but wait, wait for a disappointment. Sad end of a day of hope, which returns still to-day; nothing can keep it away from the heart, that false hope.

I am going to read: what shall I read? The choice of books is difficult, like that of men: few true and lovable.

May 19th, 1839. — A letter from Louise full of interest in you; all love, wit, charm, from beginning to end,

a way of saying things as they are said nowhere but among these rocks of Rayssac. Solitude does that; there ideas spring up which are like nothing else in the world, strange, pretty, like flowers or moss. Charming Louise, how I love her! This time she seems calm, free from illusions, she who was wont to be so full of them. I am going to join the other Louise, who is so like this one, do you not think so? who prays also and has prayers said for your recovery. "The other day," she writes to me (Louise of Rayssac), "I was at La Plâtée, my aunt's parish. I approached a devout young girl who makes her abode in this church from morning till night, and is held in great veneration for her holiness. I raised up a corner of her black veil and said to her in a low voice, 'Pardon me, mademoiselle, I should like to ask you to pray for a young man who is ill, the brother of the person I love most in the world.' 'Well, I shall pray,' she said to me with that modest air that gives more confidence to my recommendation. I have not seen her again." Was not that a pretty act of piety, the young girl begging prayers for you with an air of heavenly interest? She is charming. The angels would have granted it to her.

May 21st, 1839.—My happiness, my rapture, my delight, writing in the sunlight, listening to the birds.

That beauty of the morning has not lasted long. Alas! my friend, a letter has come from Caro speaking so gloomily of your health that I am overwhelmed. He coughs, he still coughs! These words echo everywhere, a heart-breaking thought pursues me, comes and goes, within and without, and settles on a

cemetery ; I cannot see a green leaf without thinking that soon it will fall and then the consumptives die. O God ! keep away these forebodings, restore my poor brother to health ! What must I do for him ? Oh ! unavailing love ! To suffer is all I can do for you.

May 22nd, 1839.—If ever you read this, my friend, you will have the idea of an abiding affection, that feeling that fills your thoughts from morning to night, all day and for ever, which makes sorrow and joy the spring and centre of the soul.—In reading a book on geology, I came across the description of a fossil elephant discovered in Lapland, and a canoe dug up in the Ile des Cygnes, in digging the foundations for the Pont des Invalides. Here I am on the elephant, here I am in the canoe, sailing round the North Sea and the Ile des Cygnes, seeing these places as they were in the time of those things : Lapland warm, verdant, and peopled, not by dwarfs, but by fine tall men, by women who went for a ride on elephants, in these forests, at the foot of these mountains, to-day all turned to stone ; and the Ile des Cygnes, white with flowers, and with the swan's down, oh ! how beautiful it seems. And its inhabitants, who are they ? What are they doing in this quarter of the globe ? Descended like ourselves from him who was banished from Eden, do they know of his birth, his life, his fall, his lamentable and wonderful story ; that Eve for whom he lost Eden, so much happiness and misfortune together, so much hope in faith, so many tears shed for their children, so many, many things that we know, and which were perhaps known to this people of whom

not one vestige remains? Shipwrecks of humanity that God alone knows, the wreckage of which He has concealed in the depths of the earth, as if to hide them from our curiosity! If He lets us see any of those things it is to teach us that this globe is an abyss of misery, and that all we gain by delving in its entrails is to discover inscriptions of the dead and cemeteries. Death is at the bottom of all things, and we dig for ever like one who seeks for immortality.

A letter from Félicité, giving me no better news. When will those people write who are better informed? If they could see a woman's heart beating, they would have more pity. Why are we so made that a desire consumes us, a fear crushes us, expectation besets us, a thought possesses us, and everything we touch makes us tremble? The remembrance of letters, the hour for the post, the sight of a paper, God knows what suffering they cause me! The desert of Les Coques must have seen many things done on your account. My sweet friend is there, my sister in love and affliction, a source of happiness to me in one way, a source of sorrow in another, when I see her suffering, and when I must conceal my own troubles so as to spare her sensitiveness.

May 24th, 1839.—Anxiety, growing alarm, letter from M. de Frégevillè who has found you worse. O God! must I learn by chance, as it were, that I may lose you? No one near to me, no one but a stranger will speak of you, or tell me that he has seen you on my behalf! In separation nothing is so crushing as silence. It is a foretaste of death. My friend, my brother, my dear Maurice, I know not what to think, or say, or feel. Next to God, I live but in you, like

a martyr, amidst suffering. And yet what would that be if I could offer it as the price of your recovery? If I could plunge into a sea of pain and save you from shipwreck. All redemption is made by suffering: accept mine, O God! join it to that of Lazarus' sisters, to that of Mary, to the sword that pierced her soul beside the dying Jesus; accept it, O God! Cut, wound me, but let there be a resurrection!

May 25th, 1839.—Postman has passed without leaving anything for me. The same doubts and uncertainty, the same invading fears. To know and not to know! Unspeakable state of anguish. And here is the end of this book: O God! who will read it?

IX

STILL TO HIM

TO MAURICE DEAD, TO MAURICE
IN HEAVENHE WAS THE GLORY AND THE JOY OF MY
HEART

Oh! How sweet and full of love the name of brother!

July 21st, 1839.—No, my beloved, death shall not part us, it shall not remove thee from my thoughts; death is a separation only of the body; the soul in place of being here is in Heaven, and this change of dwelling in no way lessens its affections. Very far from that, I hope; love is greater in Heaven where every thing becomes divine. Oh! my friend, Maurice, Maurice, art thou far from me, hearest thou me? Where art thou now? What is God, so beautiful, so mighty, so good, who renders thee blessed with His ineffable aspect in revealing eternity to thee. What I await thou seest; what I hope for is already thine; what I believe, thou knowest. Mysteries of the other life, how profound ye are, how terrible, sometimes

how sweet ! yes, very sweet, when I think that Heaven is the place of happiness. Poor friend, thy portion of happiness here below has been but small ; thy life, so short, has had no time for rest. O God ! sustain me, strengthen my heart in faith. Alas ! I have not enough of that support. How we, thy wife and thy sisters, have cared for thee, caressed thee, kissed thee, dead in thy bed, thy head resting on a pillow as if asleep ! Then we followed thee to the cemetery, to the tomb, thy last resting place, we prayed and wept, and now we are here, I writing to thee, as in one of thy periods of absence, when thou wast in Paris. My friend, is it true that we shall never see thee again anywhere on this earth ? Oh ! I do not wish to leave thee ; something of thy gentle presence makes itself felt even now, calms me, makes me cease from tears. Sometimes torrents of tears, then the soul grows numbed. Shall I not regret thee ? All my life will be mourning, the heart bereaved, without any close union. I love Marie dearly, and the brother who is left to me, but it is not with the sympathy that was ours. I have received a letter from thy friend D'Aurevilly for thee, heart-breaking letter that has come to be laid on thy coffin. How that has made me feel thy absence ! I must leave this, my head cannot bear it, sometimes I feel my brain reeling. Why do the tears not come ! I would deluge all things with them.

July 22nd, 1839.—This is St Magdalen's day, to whom much was pardoned because she loved much. How that thought, that came to me during the mass we heard said for thee, has consoled me

regarding thy soul ! Oh ! surely that soul has been pardoned ; my God, I can recall a whole period of faith and love that cannot have been lost in thine eyes.

Où l'éternité réside
On retrouve jusqu'au passé.

(Where dwells eternity
Not even the past is lost.)

The past of virtue above all, which must cover the weaknesses, the errors of the present ! Oh ! how that world, that other world where thou art, fills my thoughts ! My friend, thou exaltest me, my soul shakes itself free more and more from this earth ; death, I believe, would bring me contentment. Ah ! what would we do with eternity in this world ?

Visits from my aunt Fontenilles, Eliza, M. Limer, Hippolyte, Therèse, all those, alas ! who were to have come to a wedding feast, and are there for a funeral. Thus do things change. Such is the will of God. Good - night, my friend. Oh ! how we prayed this morning on thy tomb, thy wife, thy father and thy sisters.

Visits, nothing but visits. Oh, how sad to see the living, to enter into conversation, to watch things resume their ordinary course, when all is changed in the heart. My poor friend, what a void thou makest around me ! Everywhere thy empty place. . . . These young girls, these youths, our relations, our neighbours, who fill the drawing-room, who are around thee dead, would encircle thee full of life and joy, for to be with them was a pleasure, and their youthful gaiety brightened thee.

Touching letter from the Abbe de Rivières who weeps over thee as a friend ; a similar letter from

his mother for me. The tenderest expression of regret, a mother's grief mingled with mine. Oh! she knew that thou wast the child of my heart.

On the return of . . .

(No date).—I know not what I was about to say yesterday in this place when I was interrupted. Ever tears and regret. This does not pass away; on the contrary, profound sorrows are like the sea that moves ever onward, wearing its channel deeper. This is the eighth night that thou hast rested down there at Andillac in thy bed of clay. O God! console me! Direct my gaze and my hopes beyond the tomb, higher than this body has sunk. Heaven, Heaven! how my spirit soars to Heaven!

To-day a great arrival of letters that I have not read. What is there to read in them? Words that mean nothing. All human consolation is vain. How cruelly I feel the truth of these words of the *Imitation*! Thy old nurse came, poor woman, all tears, and bringing cakes and figs that thou wouldst have eaten. What grief these figs have caused me. The smallest pleasure that I saw thee enjoy seemed to me immense. And the beautiful sky, the grasshoppers, the sounds from the fields, the measured beat of the flails on the threshing floor, all that would have delighted thee plunges me in affliction. In everything I see death. That woman, that nurse who has watched over thee and held thee on her lap a whole year during thy sickness, has brought me more grief than a pall would have done. Heart-rending apparition of the past, cradle and tomb. I would pass the night here with thee on this paper; but my soul

desires prayer, the soul will do thee more good than the heart.

Each time that I put my pen here it seems as though a dagger pierced my heart. I know not if I shall continue to write. What is the use of this Journal? For whom? alas! And yet I love it as one loves a shrine where lies a dead heart, embalmed with sanctity and love. So with this paper where I treasure thee, beloved friend, where I keep a remembrance of thee that speaks again, where I shall find thee once more in my old age—if I live to be old. Oh, yes! the days will come when I shall live only in the past with thee, beside thee, young, intelligent, kind, imbuing with feeling all that came near thee, such as I see thee, such as at the moment thou hast left us. Now I know not what my life is, if I am alive. All is changed within and without. O God! how heart-rending are these letters from the kind marquis, and above all from thy friend! Oh! these letters, how they have made me weep! I find therein tear for tear! Such ties of friendship touch me, bring thee, as it were, before my eyes. My dear Maurice, all that thou hast loved is dear to me, seems a portion of thyself. We shall be brother and sister with M. d'Aurevilly: he calls himself my brother.

Read in the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine the passage about his friend's death. Found a charm of truth, a striking expression of grief in reading this, that has done me good. Saints always know how to mingle some consolation with their tears.

July 28th, 1839.—Nothing is so painful as the

return of the same persons at a time when things are all changed, to see once more in mourning those who in other days brought joy. Her aunt, Caroline's aunt, she who two years ago brought thy betrothed to us, is here where thou art no longer.

August 4th, 1839.—On this day there came into the world a brother that I was destined to love deeply, to mourn deeply, two things, alas! that go often together. I saw his coffin in the same room, in the same place, where, as a child, I remember having seen his cradle, when they brought me for his baptism from Gaillac, where I was staying. That baptism was imposing, full of merry-making, and marked out for distinction, more than that of any of the rest of us. I enjoyed myself greatly and went back next day quite in love with the little one who had just come into the world. I was then five years old. Two years after I came back, bringing him a dress that I had made him. I put his dress on him and led him by the hand along the North Warren, where he walked a few steps quite by himself, his first, which I ran to announce to my mother in great delight: "Maurice, Maurice has walked by himself." A recollection that comes back to me wet with tears.

August 6th, 1839.—A day of prayers and pious consolation: pilgrimage of thy reverend friend, the Abbé de Rivières, to Andillac, where he said mass, and where he came to pray with thy sisters beside thy grave. Oh! how that touched me; how I blessed in my heart that pious friend kneeling over thy remains,

whose soul, above this world, solaced the sufferings of thine, if it does suffer ! Maurice, I believe thou art in Heaven. I have the confidence which thy religious sentiments give me, which God's mercy inspires in me. God, so good, so compassionate, so loving, so fatherly, would he not show pity and tenderness for a son restored to him ! There are three years that grieve me ; would that I might blot them out with my tears ! O God, so many supplications have been made ! O God, thou hast heard them, thou hast granted them. O my soul, why art thou sorrowful, and why dost thou vex me !

August 17th, 1839. — Commenced to read the *Holy Desires of Death*, a book to my liking. My soul dwells in a coffin. Oh ! yes, buried, interred with thee, my friend ; as I lived in thy life, so have I died in thy death. Dead to all happiness, to all hope on this earth. Every thought was centred in thee, as a mother's in a son ; I was less a sister than a mother. Dost thou remember how I compared myself to Monica weeping for her Augustine, when we were speaking of my sorrow about thy soul, that dear erring soul ? How I have entreated God for its salvation, how I have prayed, supplicated ! A holy priest said to me, " Your brother will return." Oh ! he returned, and then he left me for Heaven, for Heaven, I hope. There were clear signs of grace, of mercy, in that death. O God, I have more reason to bless Thee than to repine. Thou hast made him of Thy chosen ones by the sufferings that redeem, by the acceptation and resignation that merit recompense, by the faith that sanctifies. Oh ! yes, that faith

had come back to him, ardent and deep; that was shown by religious acts, prayers, reading, and in that kiss imprinted on the cross with such fervour and love shortly before his death. Oh! I who saw him do it, who watched him so closely in his last actions, I said, O God, I said he was departing to Paradise. Such is the end of those who depart to a better life.

Maurice, my friend, what is Heaven like, that abode of friends? Wilt thou never give me a sign from there? Shall I not hear thy voice, as it is said we sometimes hear the voices of the dead? Oh, if thou art able, if there exists any communication between here and the other world, come back! I shall not fear to behold some night an apparition, I who was bound to thee by so many ties. Thou in Heaven and I on earth, oh! how death parts us! I write this in the little room, that little room so dearly loved, where we talked so much together, just we two. There is thy place and here mine. There lay thy portfolio so full of secrets of the heart and of the understanding, so full of thee and of the things that have decided thy life. I believe that the events have influenced thy life. If thou hadst stayed here thou wouldst not be dead. *Dead!* thy sister's terrible and single thought.

August 20th, 1839.—Yesterday I went to Cahuzac to hear the mass said for thee, at the same time as that which the Prince of Hohenlohe offered in Germany to beseech God for thy recovery, alas! too late. A fortnight after thy death the answer came bringing me sorrow instead of hope. How much I regret that I did not think sooner of this means of salvation

which has saved so many others ! It is on well established facts that I had recourse to the wonder-working of saints, and I believed so strongly in miracles ! O God ! I believe in them still, even while I weep. Maurice, a torrent of sadness has passed over my soul to-day. Each day makes thy loss more felt, and deepens the suffering in my heart. Alone in the wood with my father, we sat in the shade, speaking of thee. I looked at the place where thou camest and sat two years ago, the first day, I think, thou wast out. Oh ! what a memory of sickness and recovery ! I am sad even to death. I long to see thee. Every moment I pray to God to grant me this. This Heaven, this Heaven of the souls, is it so far from us, the Heaven of time from that of eternity ? Oh ! the depth ! Oh ! the mysteries of the other life that part us ! I who was in such sorrow over him, I who was so eager to know everything ; wherever he is now, it is all over. I follow him into the three abodes, I stop at the joy, I pass on to the suffering, to the fiery gulfs. O God ! O God ! let not my brother be there, let him not be there ! He is not there ; his soul, Maurice's soul is not among the sinners. The dreadful fear, no ! But in Purgatory, where we suffer, where the weaknesses of the heart, the doubts of the soul, the promptings of evil are expiated. Perhaps my brother is suffering there and calls to us in moans, as he did during his bodily sufferings : " Help, you who love me." Yes, my friend, by prayer. I am going to pray ; I have prayed so much and I always shall. Prayers, oh ! prayers for the dead, they are the dew of Purgatory.

Sophie has written to me, this Sophie, Marie's

friend, who loves me in her, and is coming to console me. But nothing human can console me. I should like to go to Africa and offer my life to some one, busy myself converting the Arabs in Madame Violar's establishment. My days would not seem so empty and useless as they are. This idea of the convent, which I had laid aside on thy account, comes back to me.

The rose-bush, the little rose-bush from Les Coques has bloomed. How much sadness, fears, memories have opened out with these flowers, shut up in that vase which was given by Marie, and which we carried off with us in the carriage on the journey from Tours to Bordeaux, and from there home. This rose-bush delighted thee, it pleased thee to see it and to think whence it came. I saw all that and how pretty the little buds and foliage were.

August 22nd, 1839.—I put on my finger the antique ring that thou hadst taken and put on when thou wast here two years ago, that ring that had made us laugh so many times when I said to thee, "And the ring?" Oh! how sad it makes me when I look at it, and how much I love it! My friend, to me everything is a relic of thee.

Death will give us all things. Consoling words that I have been meditating; it brings back hope to my heart, that poor bereaved heart.

How I love his letters, these letters that no longer come! O God! accept all my sufferings and all the pangs of that love. See how I grieve over this soul, how anxious I am about its salvation, how I would endure martyrdom to gain its admission to Heaven. O God! hear my prayers: enlighten, touch,

draw to Thee this soul so well fitted to know and serve Thee ! Oh ! how grievous to see such fine spirits go astray, such noble creatures, beings endowed with so many gifts, on whom God seems to bestow all His favours, as on beloved children, made nearest to His own image ! Ah ! how they are to be pitied ! How often my soul weeps over them with Jesus who came to save them ! I long for the salvation of all, that all should profit by the redemption that includes all mankind. But the heart has its elect, and for those we have longings and fears greater a hundred-fold. That is not forbidden. Jesus, hadst not Thou Thy dearly loved John, whom the apostles said Thou wouldst save from death ? Let them live for ever those that I love, let them live a life eternal ! Oh ! that is my hope, it is not with this world's love that I love them. Alas ! we hardly see each other in this world, but the soul remains attached to the soul.

August 25th, 1839.—Sorrow and communion ; I have wept in God ; written to thy friend ; read Pascal, the wonderful thinker. I have pondered over this thought about the love of God, that we love without knowing it. *The heart has its reasons that the reason does not comprehend.* I have often felt that.

August 26th, 1839.—Some drops of rain on the parched ground. Perhaps there will be a storm to-night, brewed from these vapours. Let it thunder, let there be torrents of thunder and wind ! I should like noise, quaking, anything but this depressing calm. What if I were to write his life, that life so young, so rich, so strange, connected with so many events, so many interests, so many hearts ! There are few lives like it.

August 27th, 1839.—If it were not for my father, I would perhaps join the sisters of St Joseph at Algiers. At least my life would be useful. What can I do with it now? I had centred it all in thee, my poor brother! Thou toldst me not to leave thee. Indeed I remained by thee to see thee die. An *ecce homo*, the man of sorrow, sorrowful beyond all others. The sufferings of Jesus, the holy longings for death, these are my sole thoughts and meditations. I wrote to Louise as well as Marie; it does me good to write to the latter. And why does not thy brother write? Can he be dead also? O God! how the silence terrifies me just now! Pardon me for these fears. What has that soul to fear which is united to thee? Would I not love Thee, O God! Thou one veritable and eternal love? I seem to love Thee, as the timid Peter said, but not John, who slept on Thy bosom. The holy rest that I lack! What do I look for among men? Shall I make a pillow of a human breast! I who have seen how death takes it from us. Rather shall I rest, Jesus, on thy crown of thorns.

August 28th, 1839.—Saint Augustine's day, that saint who wept so tenderly for his friend, and for having been so late in loving God. May I be spared these two regrets; oh! may I be spared this two-edged grief, that would rend my heart and kill me! To die without love is to die in hell. Divine love is the only true love. The others are but shadows.

Dejection, burden of sorrow; let us try to lift up this mountain of sadness. What is to be done? Oh! how ignorant the soul is! We must cling to God, who raises up both the ship and the ocean. Frail barque, how I am left on an ocean of tears!

Each day a thought to be gathered. This is to-day's: "It is an awful thing to feel one's possessions slipping away, to feel that we may grow attached to them without ever asking whether there is anything that lasts."—I have read much, looked after some little birds that were brought to me, but without interest, from pity, for all my affections are dead, all, except that which death has taken from me.

August 29th, 1839.—Man is a thinking reed.

August 30th, 1839.—How pleasant it was in the vineyard this morning, that vineyard with the chasselas grapes you used to like. Sadness filled my soul at finding myself there, at walking where you had walked. I sat down in the shadow of a cherry-tree, and there, thinking of the past, I wept. All was green, fresh, beautiful to behold in the golden sunlight. The signs of autumn's approach are beautiful, the mild temperature, the sky no longer clouded, the hues of mourning that begin to show. I love all that, I feast my eye on it, it sinks into my heart and melts me to tears. To see it alone, that is so sad! But thou, thou seest Heaven! Oh! I do not pity you. The soul must taste ineffable joys,

Se plongeant dans l'extase où fut l'aveugle-né
Quand le jour apparut à son œil étonné.

August 31st, 1839.—What a difference between what I am saying and what I would say if he were alive! O God! all is changed within me and without: death casts a certain darkness over all things.—Wrote to Misy about the death of her uncle Jules de Roquefeuil, departed from this world quite young. On all sides graves are opening.

“That strange mystery into which God has withdrawn, impenetrable to the eye of man, teaches us the great lesson that we may retire into solitude far from the sight of men.

Man is so made that by dint of telling him he is a fool, he believes it ; and by dint of telling ourselves we are fools we believe it.

God has created man with two loves : the one for God, the other for himself. . . . Sin having come into the world, man has lost the first of these loves ; and being left alone in a great soul capable of an infinite love, this self-love has spread and overflowed into the void that the love for God has left¹.”

It is raining ; this rain, which clothes the meadows and woods with fresh green, falls on the earth that covers thee and dissolves thy ashes in the cemetery, down there at Andillac. How happy we are in thinking that there is in man something that destruction cannot touch !

“There are creatures that Thou withdrawest from this world for slight faults ; that is done out of love, and to save them from new sins.” If we did not know that this thought is from Shakespeare, we would believe it was from Fénelon. Ah ! I know to whom I apply it.

September 5th, 1839.—A letter from Marie, the mournful Marie, who repeats each day the prayer for the dead. Such is the heart of woman : even in turning towards God, it looks to its own affections.

September 9th, 1839.—I am filled with discouragement about all things in life. I shall not continue to

¹ Pascal, *Pensées* ; on his father's death.

write. What is the use of this diary? Why? since it cannot be for him! When he was alive, I had my prop in him; I had my pleasure in the thought of pleasing him.—That taken away, what is left for these human distractions, reading, thinking, poetry? Nothing but their own value, which is nothing.

Wrote to Marie, herself another living poem. I say to her, “Believe that you are loved even by the heart most dead.”

September 25th, 1839.—Again to Marie.

September 30th, 1839.—To my brother at Paris, the brother of him in his tomb.

No more writing to-day in this book, no more thoughts: illusion is no longer possible; at every word, at every line, I feel that he will not read what I write. O God! I was so much accustomed to tell him everything; I loved him so deeply! “The greatest misfortune of life is the severing of ties”—Oh! I feel the truth of these words, which had struck me in a book at Les Coques.

I have need of Heaven.

It is not for nothing that we have met in this life. I shall strive, O God! to turn my thoughts towards you.

Je voudrais que le ciel fût tout tendu de noir,
Et qu'un bois de cyprès vint à couvrir la terre;
Que le jour ne fût plus qu'un soir.

Une gazelle errante
S'abrite en cette tour,
Et l'hirondelle y chante,
Y chante nuit et jour.

October 3rd, 1839.—Wrote to Paris. Oh! what

an anniversary of my departure last year !—Shall I tell here all the memories that recur, tears, regrets, the lost past, changed so soon into mourning?—My heart is full, it would fain weep.—Maurice, Maurice, are not these forebodings true? When I think of those that tormented me on the way and at Paris and on the marriage-day, how they have proved true! I dreamt of death; I saw nothing but shrouds in that salon where they were dancing, where I danced in my sadness, for I wished to shake off these thoughts.

Is it not lost time to recall these things, O God! I am alone in Thy sight; I might do better than grieve. Art Thou not there for my hope, for my consolation, to show me a better world, where my brother is now?

October 4th, 1839.—I wanted to send his friend two pomegranates from the pomegranate-tree round the foot of which he dug a few days before his death. That was the last thing he did on earth.

October 6th, 1839.—At this very hour, midday, the first Sunday of October, I was at Paris, in his arms, at the Place Notre-Dame-des-Victoires. A year ago, O God!—How I was struck by his thinness, his cough, I who on the road had dreamed of death!—We went together to the church of Saint-Sulpice, to midday mass. To-day at Lentin in the rain, painful memories and solitude. . . . But, my soul, be soothed with the God thou hast accepted in that little church. He is thy brother, thy friend, the beloved Ruler whom thou shalt never see die, never lose, either in this life or the next. Let us seek consolation in that hope, and the hope that in God we

find all that we have lost. If I could depart on high, if I felt my breast drawing its last breath, that breath that bears the soul to Heaven, oh ! I would have few regrets for this life. But life is a trial, and is mine not long enough ; have I not suffered enough ? When we turn to the crucifix we see what is the price of Heaven. Oh ! many tears, anguish, thorns, gall and vinegar. Have I tasted all that ? O God, keep me from repining, strengthen me in silence and resignation at the foot of the cross, with Mary and the women who loved Thee.

October 19th, 1839.—Three months to-day since that death, that separation. Oh ! the mournful date, one, nevertheless, that I wish to write each time it comes round. This date, as it comes round, brings with it a sadness that clings to me ; I cannot see it without marking it in my life, since I am noting my life down. Oh ! what would I put there now, if it were not my tears, my regrets for all I have loved ? This is all that will come to you, you who wish me to continue my diary, my every-day life at Le Cayla. I was going to discontinue it ; there was too much bitterness in speaking to him in the tomb ; but since you are there, my living brother, and are pleased to listen to me, I continue my friendly chat. In you I bind up all that remained there, struck down by death. *I shall write for you as I wrote for him.* You are my adopted brother, the brother of my heart. Therein is illusion and reality, consolation and sorrow ; Maurice everywhere. It is, then, on the 19th October that I date the commencement for you, and mark this day as an epoch in my life, my life of isolation, of solitude, of obscurity, which sends its

message to some member of society, to you at Paris, almost, as I said to you, as if Eustoquia, in her desert at Bethlehem, had written to some elegant Roman knight. The contrast is striking, but does not surprise me. Someone, a woman, said to me that in my place she would be much embarrassed in writing to you. As for myself, I do not understand why I should be. I feel quite at my ease with you ; indeed quite as much as with Maurice ; you take his place in my heart and understanding. It is from this point of view that our intimacy is established.

October 20th, 1839.—A beautiful autumn morning ! A transparent atmosphere, a sunrise radiant and calm, piled-up clouds, from north to south, glorious clouds, of delicate and bright colour, of fleecy gold on a blue sky. It was beautiful, it was beautiful ! I regretted I was the only one there to see it. I thought of our friend the painter, M. Augier, who appreciates so quickly in his artist's soul everything that is beautiful. And then Maurice and you, I should have liked to see you all under our sky at Le Cayla ; but we are never more to meet on this earth !

On my way to Posadou I wanted to gather a very pretty flower. I left it until my return, and I took another road. Farewell, my flower. When I return there, where will it be ? Next time I shall not leave my flowers on the way. Yet how often that happens in life !

To-day is Sunday. At Andillac I looked once more on that grave all green with grass. How quickly it has come ! How life hastens on over death, and how sad that is to see ! Heart-breaking it would

be, but for the faith which tells us that we shall be born again, and come forth from these tombs where we seem lost to sight.

October 21st, 1839.—Thunder, storm, tempest outside, but calm within, that calm of a dead sea, which has its suffering as well as its unrest. Repose is good only when it is in God, that repose of saintly souls, who before their death, have retired from life. A happy liberation! I die of longing for all celestial things: for here below all is vile and bears an earthly burden.

Read a few pages of a journey in Spain. Strange nation of brigands and monks. The monks are gone, what is left now? Cut-throats clearly; Don Carlos at Bourges, the heir of Ferdinand the Catholic expelled from the throne and the kingdom, a prisoner in France. That book interests me. It is the journal of a good-natured traveller who chats as he runs, and depicts with the polish and graceful wit of a man of the world, all he comes across. Heavy descriptions weary me. I also like M. de Custine, who is amusing, though sometimes a little tedious, but it is like the tedium of a ball. Then so few books come to Le Cayla, that provided they please a little, they give much pleasure.

October 22nd, 1839.--A letter from Marie, my sister Marie, who has left me for a few days along with Érembert. So here I am alone with my father. How our family is reduced, and I tremble at the thought that the circle may grow smaller still!

Read some passages of *The Holy Longings for Death*, a pious and spiritual book that I love, one

that raises us to the skies. I need it for my soul, that sinks and faints under the burden of life. We can find distraction in life, but in faith alone can we find support. How I pity the sorrowful spirits that know this not, or are unwilling to believe ! I spoke of it so much to Maurice ; I speak of it to all that I love, of eternal things ; for mine is not a worldly love ; that is worthless ; Heaven is the home of love.

October 24th, 1839.—Neither reading nor writing nor prayer can check my tears to-day. My poor Maurice ! I began to think of all he has suffered, in body and soul at the close of his life. What a heart-breaking sight ! O God ! hast Thou not sustained him ?

October 27th, 1839.—I have had no desire to write for the last two days. If I take up my pen again to-day, it is because in opening my green portfolio I saw this diary, and am noting in it that my father has just handed over to me a packet of his dear Maurice's letters, and a lock of his hair, that I may put away these precious relics with the others I have. Oh ! burial ! Shall I write what I feel, what I think, what I suffer ? I shall not write : I shall speak only of a tomb, of the things that must be told only to God.

November 1st, 1839.—What an anniversary ! I was in Paris, sitting alone in the drawing-room, thinking, as I am now, on that Saint's day. Maurice came to look for me, to converse a little about spiritual matters, and he gave me a note-book, saying, "I want you to write for me in this all your doings in

Paris." Oh! poor friend! I have written it, but he has not read it. He was carried off so suddenly, so quickly, before he had time to do anything, this youth born to accomplish so much, it seemed. But God has willed it otherwise than we thought. There are beautiful souls of whom we are doomed to see here only the semblance, whose realisation is completed elsewhere, in the next life. This world is only a place of transition, as the saints believed, as the soul hastening on its way to the other world believes also. Ah! what a blessing that all is not here! Impossible, impossible! If the grave were the end of us, God would be a malicious being; yes, malicious, to create wretched creatures for a few days: horrible to think of. Years alone make us believe in immortality. Maurice has ended his time of suffering, I hope, and to-day I see him always among the blessed. I say to myself that he is surely there, that he pities those whom he sees on earth, that he longs to have me near him, as he longed in Paris. O God! that reminds me that we were together this day last year; that I had a brother, a friend whom I can no more see or hear. After so much intimacy the ties between us are all severed! Therein lies the bitterness of death. To regain him, that being so dearly, so closely bound to my heart, I must descend into the grave, I must plunge into eternity. What is to become of those of us who have not God with us at that dreadful moment? What is to become of you, you, a friend so deeply dejected by his death, when your affliction turns towards the other world? Oh! you are not lacking in faith doubtless; but have you a faith that consoles, the faith of piety?

Inclined as I am to think that you have not it, I begin to pity you with all my heart. The anxiety on this score that possessed me about my brother's soul, is all transferred to yours, which is almost as dear. I cannot tell to what degree I loved him, to what degree I love him now: 'tis something that rises towards the infinite, towards God. There I pause; to this thought are linked a thousand others, dead and living, but above all dead, my diary, commenced for him, continued for you, written last year with some delight, now with nothing but tears. My poor Maurice, *I am abandoned on a world where there are unceasing tears, unceasing anguish.*

THE DAY OF THE DEAD

Voilà les feuilles sans sève
Qui tombent sur le gazon;
Voilà le vent qui s'élève
Et gémit dans le vallon.

.

C'est la saison où tout tombe
Aux coups redoublés des vents
Un vent qui vient de la tombe
Moissonne aussi les vivants.

(See how around us the dead leaves fall,
Softly, one by one, to the wintry ground;
Hear how the angry wild winds call
Through the depth of the valleys, with mournful sound.

'Tis the season, alas! when all things fade
At the touch of the autumn wind's chill breath;
The wind that springs from the grave's dark shade
Gathers all alike in the harvest of Death.)

A few years ago we used to repeat these lines, Maurice and I, as we wandered over the withered leaves, the day of the Dead. O God ! and now he is laid low too, he so young, the last-born of our family, whom I thought to leave in this world surrounded by children who would have wept over me, as over their mother ! Instead of that, 'tis I who weep, 'tis I who look upon a grave that shuts in all my hopes, my happiness, my earthly affection. Oh ! how that detaches me from all things, and bears the afflicted soul far from this life, towards that place where Death cannot enter. Nothing to-day but pray, weep, write. Oh ! terrible day of the dead !

November 3rd, 1839.—I wrote yesterday to you, Maurice's friend, sad as I was. It is only to you that I can speak in my tears, as I have done in my letter. For Marie that would be hurtful, for others it would be without interest, and then grief shows itself only to its nearest.

November 5th, 1839.—I laid my brow on my father's hands as they rested on his knees. Oh ! a sweet pillow ! All my heart seemed to mount to my head to enjoy that rest. My father is kind, with a kindness tender, warm, and loving, as is said of the divine goodness to which that of a father is akin, he inspires a love that knows no bounds. I conceal from him nothing but what would pain him. I show him Marie's letters, yours, all. Still I hesitate to show him my note-book, on account of the occasional sadness that pervades it.

A visit, a curé of the neighbourhood who gave me a certain satisfaction. The sight of a priest, when he is good, comforts the sorrowful, and this is one of these to whom the saints would bow. He spoke to us of his little church, his little parish, his little crosses, and from one to the other, led us to an hour of conversation that seemed too short. Can we say as much for the conversations we carry on in society? More than once in a drawing-room I have yawned in my handkerchief. It is not so much wit nor matter that attracts us, but a certain way of saying it.

The postman ! some letters ! Oh ! what a lot letters mean for us in the country ! These loved absent ones who return into our heart and soul. Why can we not write to Heaven !

November 6th, 1839.—A child has come bringing me a dead bird that he had caught under a stone. I am thinking how that pretty little life of air, freedom and song has been struck down like all else, has fallen into that snare of death where all falls.

I have written nothing to-day, and shall not write just yet. What would you do with my three hundred and sixty-five days almost all alike, watching, as it were, the waves go past, each like the other? Diversity interests the eyes and the mind, for we take pleasure only in curiosity. Where there is nothing new, we grow wearied. There have been days of such stillness that I have longed for a thunderbolt. What interest, then, would my perpetual calm have for you? For, except what goes on in my heart or in my head, nothing stirs in my life.

Just now I have come back from a short walk in

the sunshine, and nothing moves around me, except a few flies that hum in the warm air. Alone in the great deserted monastery. This deep and utter isolation causes me to live for an hour as the hermits, men and women, these souls withdrawn from the world, have lived for years. Without worldly cares, with none but inward speech, with no feelings but those of the understanding, no life but that of the soul : in this detachment there is a liberty full of joy, a strange bliss, to preserve which we might seek a hiding-place, I believe, a hundred leagues away in the desert. So there were some that forsook the court for this, like St Arsenius and so many others, who, having tasted both, had no wish to return to the world. For the world does not satisfy the soul ; it amuses, but does not keep it alive : that is our feeling as we advance in years, when the heart shakes off its illusions, just as it once had been their victim. We feel surprised and melancholy at the void that pleasures leave when they depart. What is to become of us then ? Faith teaches us, and the Christian knows it. My poor Maurice ! how many times I said this to him, asking him if he believed it true, and he never denied it to me. I have no dislike for the world, nevertheless ; I can live in it and I can do without it, and I pity those who are its slaves or its devotees, wretched or foolish.

I had little thought of writing this when I came back from my walk in the sunshine ; but that is what solitude leads me to, to love it and speak of it, and that with you, a lover of society. It must certainly be the case that you have become my brother. To a brother we say all that comes into our minds. I

know not if my thoughts are agreeable to you. I have sometimes doubted if I did not weary Maurice ; but thrusting aside the doubt (which I cannot endure in anything), I wrote in full confidence letters and diaries that he loved. I knew it, knew it well, which arose from his friendship for me. Dear friend ! how I think of him to-day, how in prayer this morning I felt myself lifted up to the other world where he is now, where he awaits me as he awaited me at Paris ! Ah ! how many wonders we shall see there, different from what we see in these cities built in the mire ! Since his death I set no value on the world ; before that God had taught me its true worth ; but to understand the insignificance of this world the heart must have its lesson, and mine has had it ! Now I am going to busy myself with other things than writing here. With or without pleasures, so long as the soul is here, so long as one bears the burden of life, one must fulfil its obligations.

November 8th, 1839. — Louise, Marie of Les Coques came to me this evening by letter : dear meeting of the dearest women and friends that I know. They resemble each other greatly, though Marie is more developed in worldly things. I had a long talk with my father on this subject and about the affections of the heart. I consulted him on this subject and also on a chapter of *The Imitation* that had troubled me. He soothed me and showed that I was understanding things in too exclusive a sense, that my pious reading applied to the life of the cloister, and not to those in the outer world. Thanks to my father I can therefore preserve my

affections without fear ; for after outbursts of affection I withdraw in fear, dreading that I have loved too much. If the heart were engaged here there would be none left for Heaven. I wish to take my faculty of love with me into the other world.

November 10th, 1839.—Caroline has written to us after a somewhat long silence, long enough to give me time to believe she had forgotten. This troubled me ; I should like a future, if not of friendship, at least of good-will with this young woman who was my brother's wife. This name binds her so closely to my heart ! I should be deeply affected if I saw her drifting altogether apart. Her letter is kind, full of interest ; and I am glad. Poor dear widow, how I should like to kiss her at this moment ! I look upon her as a sister, as a sister who is mistaken. I must bear her no grudge, she does not think she is mistaken.

To-morrow morning at dawn I set off on a journey to visit some relations two leagues from here. A day lost for writing and for my wonted life ; but perhaps I shall return with something new, like the tourists, who have all seen something extraordinary everywhere they go.

November 12th, 1839.—There was a time when I described with delight the smallest trifles. A few steps outside, a walk in the sunshine through fields or woods gave me much to talk about. Was it because I was speaking to *him*, and that the heart furnishes plenty to say ? I know not, but no longer having the pleasure of pleasing him, what I see no

longer offers the interest I found in it once upon a time. Yet nothing is changed outside, it is, then, within myself. In my eyes everything takes on the same sad hue, all my thoughts turn to death. I have neither the desire nor the power to write. Besides, what shall I write that can benefit you, you for whom I wish so many blessings, difficult, alas ! for me to bestow.

I have found in a book a rose-leaf withered, who knows how long? I ask myself that as I retrace the memories of past springs, day and places where that rose has bloomed ; but of these lost memories none comes back. It is no misfortune to be a flower without a date. All that is touched with mystery has a certain charm. That petal in that book interests me more than it could have done when on its rose and on its bush. It has interrupted my reading. If one is in a thoughtful mood, there are things to make one stop every instant and fall into meditation over the incidents of life.

Le front sur une fleur, je pensais à la tombe.

(With my brow on a flower, I thought of a tomb.)

The thought of death, of God, and of those I love never leaves me.

November 14th, 1839.—I have returned once more to my complete solitude. My father has gone to get some books from a neighbouring library. I do not know what he will bring. I have asked for *Notre-Dame de Paris*, a book which up to now I had no wish to read. Why am I going to read it at present? Because I feel my heart so dead that nothing can hurt it ; because there are said to be beauties in it

that I am anxious to know ; and a holy man whom I trust greatly has told me that I could read this book, as the evil is rendered harmless by the way of looking at it. Even the devil when he is repulsive loses his power. To meet him is not to fall into his clutches. Perhaps it would be better to remain in ignorance of all books and all things ; but neither do I care for knowledge. It is not for instruction that I read but for improvement ; for me everything is a ladder to reach the sky, even this little book that I fasten to a celestial thought. God knows the thought. If God did not know all I would show Him all. I could not do without divine approval in my life and my affections, but I care little for that of men, still less for that of women.

November 15th, 1839.—O God, God ! what a day ! the anniversary of his marriage. At this hour a year ago we were at the Abbaye-aux-Bois, he, you, and I ; I at his side. To-day too I come from a church, and from standing beside his grave.

November 16th, 1839.—Nothing written here yesterday after these lines. There are feelings that are beyond all words. God knows in what abyss I was plunged and overwhelmed by the memories of his marriage. I thought of him and his beautiful bride kneeling before the altar, Père Buquet blessing them and speaking of the future, the crowd of guests, the tones of the organ, that collection for the poor over which I had some difficulty, the signing of our names in the sacristy, so many witnesses for that brilliant contract with death.—The meeting with

the hearse outside; the luncheon where I sat by your side and you said to me, "How handsome your brother is!" where we spoke so much of his life;—the evening, the ball where I danced for the first and last time. To Maurice I owe these unique events in my life. The pleasure of seeing him look happy, of being at his wedding, and beneath all that joy, pangs at my heart, and that horrible vision of coffins around the salon, placed on these long stools and draped with fringes of silver. Oh! what a chill I felt on coming out of their room, in my ball-dress, decked with flowers, how all that came into my mind! I closed my eyes to it. A day and a night, memorable in such different ways, date of so many sorrows, I cannot keep it out of my mind. I abandon myself to all these things, and when I think of all the happiness I had set in a being who now exists only in memory, I feel an unspeakable sadness, and learn that we must not build our hopes on any life nor on anything at all. There is a coffin between the world and me; all that I could find pleasure in is gone. I have ties of the heart, no longer any of happiness, or enjoyment. Maurice and I were bound to each other inwardly by rose-hued bonds. Everything about him seemed gay to me, everything pleased me, even his sorrows: O Lord! to have lost that! what must I love now?

November 17th, 1839.—A beautiful day, radiant and warm, the air bathed in sunshine. That cheers and is good to feel as well as to enjoy and admire. Though at present, alas! I take less interest in

the state of the sky than I did a few months ago, at the time the invalid was here, I am glad to see a beautiful day, the only pretty thing to be seen in the country in November.

Ah! what a delightful surprise your letter was last night! I did not expect it so soon, nor such a kind one, though that is not surprising; but every mark of distinction is always rather a surprise. I do not know how that is. Then I have found in that letter things that grieved me, those spiritual griefs that a Christian feels for a poor brother's soul, for someone who says: "I do not pray." God knows what my thoughts are on that point, what I suffer. I have the future life of those loved ones who do not believe so much at heart, that I would joyfully suffer martyrdom, to gain their salvation. This is no exaggeration, but well considered in the light of reason and the feeling of faith. Here are Marie and Érembert arriving.

November 28th, 1839. — I have left this book locked up for the last fortnight. How many things in this gap that will be recorded nowhere, not even here! . . . I have recommenced in order to note a letter from Marie, my fair friend, who trembles at believing me ill. Alas! no, I do not suffer in body. Oh! how useless it seems to write!

December 10th, 1839. — Shall I be able to write at last? How many times I have taken up my pen during the last week, and it has always fallen idly from my fingers! There has been so much sorrow in my soul, so many shocks to my being! O Lord!

I seem to have reached my end, a sort of moral annihilation. How terrible that state is! There is nothing to sooth or sustain: work, rest, books, men, all are distasteful. One would fain die. In this contest the unbelieving soul would be lost, Oh! lost, if God did not reveal Himself; but He never fails, some unexpected help comes from above.

I have found in the words of a priest (another of Maurice's friends!) an un hoped-for help, a relief, a calm, a religious balm, that made me feel all that is sweetest and strongest in faith, the power of consolation. Often by myself I cannot reach this. These are efforts that fatigue and crush me. We are too small for heavenly things. The need of a mediator makes itself felt in us. Between God and man, Jesus Christ. Between Jesus and ourselves, the priest, he who places the Gospel within reach of all. Some need threats; others, hopes; I need love, the love of God, the one real love. As soon as I am restored to it, as soon as I am immersed in it, I no longer endure hopeless sufferings. A blessing on the holy priest, the brother's friend who has consoled the sister! It is because he knew Maurice that I went to him; I thought he would know me better than another. I was not mistaken; indeed he understood me. He has that familiarity with the heart, the agonies of the soul, that sadness even to death, and he sustains you, this angel. . . .

Who would have said to me ten years ago when they were at college together that this youth would know my griefs, that I would confide them to him, and he would soothe them with words such as I have never heard before, divine words that I shall

go and hear now and then, though the distance is rather far? When my sufferings are too great I shall make this pilgrimage. Brother of my heart, here you see into my inmost heart, to the very foundation of my being, as Maurice did. It may be you will read this only after my death, and what went on in this poor anchorite during her life, what she told you of her soul, will seem to you less incomprehensible, less strange.

December 13th, 1839.—Before I leave my room I wish to tell this dear chronicle which you beg me to continue, that I have just read one of your letters, the letter of a brother and a friend, full of frank affection and confidence, in which these words have especially touched me: “I want you to possess the thread of my soul, I want you to be able to call yourself my sister by predestination as well as by voluntary and deliberate adoption. . . .” I have seized hold of that, and am forming between us, from *this thread of your soul*, a knot that will not come undone. I have prayed for Paula. That poor girl’s soul, where is it? That death which has taken her from you, whither has it borne her? There are several abodes in the other world, and I tremble for those who depart, who die amid the passion and error of youth. I did not know Paula, but some of your words roused my fears; and then how close were the bonds between you and that child, who was more attached to you than to any living soul! But let us say no more, it is as well to think no evil of any one.

December 14th, 1839.—I have written to Marie to inquire about that matter you mention. I have read nothing and done nothing but write. Thought resumes its course ; the spring is checked by a bier, but the water has flowed above it. Here the stream of my thoughts begins once more to flow, sometimes like a torrent, sometimes a thread of water, according to the state of my soul. Evening draws me away from this and from my little room, where I have spent a whole day of calm and solitude. It is strange how I love this isolation.

December 15th, 1839.—Coming back from mass (it is Sunday), I walked with a woman who told me her troubles. Poor miller's wife ! surrounded with eight children, the object of unbounded love, she still mourns over her mother whom she has lost. "I seek for her everywhere," she said, "I dream of her at night and feel her caressing me." In this grief and sensibility there is an infinite tenderness, an expression of a woman's love that appeals to one's natural feelings ; a thing which perhaps is not so well seen in society as among these poor country women. Here we see them as they are ; elsewhere we see them as they become under the moulding of education, dress, and vanity. In society all is on the surface. It is true, and in a short time I have seen many dramas in real life. I had been told of it before, but I would not have believed Paris to be what it is, for at Paris only do we see society on a large scale, as a whole. In the country we have only the finger-tips, fragments, which cannot give any adequate idea. My poor miller's wife has shown

me clearly what in my eyes is sweetest, a woman's heart in all its natural sensibility.

December 16th, 1839.—Marie, Marie, you write to me too much, you have affected me too deeply. No one has had so much influence over my life as that woman, during these two years that our friendship has lasted. All that affects her moves me.

December 19th, 1839.—Silence for two days; but the return of this date of death cannot pass without a word, without the *memento* of the dead. Like the miller's wife I can say that I think of him and seek him always, that I suffer from this missing affection. Last night I finished a hymn to him, which I put into the lips of St Theresa for a brother she had. You will see that, you to whom goes forth all that went to Maurice. Ah! must all pass over his bier now! This thought—shall I say it to you? casts such a shadow over my soul that I can find pleasure in nothing; even this diary that I would have written with rapture for him, and which I like to write to you, is done with the grief and sadness of one who builds on a tomb.

I have written this in the splendour of the sunshine, under the brightest, bluest, most spring-like sky, though it is December. Amidst all this I think of the Paris sky, that iron-grey that you look on with such displeasure and sickness of heart. It is very hard for a strong man like you, for a creature so strong as man to be dejected by a little air. This *demoralising* weather, you say: is there no way of escaping these atmospheric influences, or, at least,

warding them off? Too great a question to be dealt with at Le Cayla, where to preserve ourselves from time we think of eternity, like the poor hermits. I cannot tell you the happy influence the lofty thoughts of faith have over me. Fortunate that I can enjoy this benign aid ! for a little air often makes me ill also.

Two visits : I note them because they are rare at present in our desert, and among the visitors was a man wonderfully ugly, one Pélisson ; a face deeply marked and seamed, all out of shape, yet the soul hides the features. At the first glance he shocks, at the second he pleases, at the third he attracts. How intelligence pleases us and lends dignity to man's physical appearance !

December 20th, 1839. — A letter from Caroline with a drawing of Maurice, but not at all like him. Her memory has served her badly, poor widow, or rather I believe her pencil is not capable of reproducing her memory, of grasping firmly enough that great image in her soul. Why have I not a pencil also? Perhaps I should succeed no better, but at least I should try. She who drew her lover on a wall, that woman who, they say, invented drawing, had doubtless no other talent than her love. How often I see a shadow that I long to fix somewhere ! *Ah! altogether lost!* To-morrow I shall write to you.

December 22nd, 1839. — From death to life, from one brother to another. I was writing an elegy. While the page is drying, as I have no powder, I turn to this. I have to record one of the sweetest and calmest days I have spent for a long time. Oh !

what a blessing, peace without and within ! Peace, Maurice's great prayer in his last troubled days. " Oh ! peace, the dear object of my heart ! O Lord, who art my peace, who makest us at peace with ourselves, with all men, who by this means pacifiest Heaven and earth ! When will it be, O Lord, when will it be that by the tranquillity of my conscience, by a quiet faith in Thy favour, by an entire acquiescence, or rather an attachment, a submission to Thy eternal will in all the events of life, I shall possess that peace that is in Thee, that comes from Thee, and is Thou Thyself."

I have thought that exclamation, that prayer, very beautiful. Oh ! these religious things, to these I give myself at all times. They are the only things I believe, and almost all I love. But for that all things cast over me the sadness of death. A glance at the sky cheers me, and gives me a new zest for life.

Oh ! laissez-moi ma foi pieuse
Et l'espérance radieuse.

(Oh ! leave to me my pious faith
And all my radiant hopes.)

December 24th, 1839. — Wrote without end yesterday and to-day ; now let us retire, thou, my diary, into thy portfolio, thou, my soul, into thyself or rather into God, to the sweet mysteries of our Saviour. It is Christmas Eve. I hear the bells from all our belfrys ringing *nadalet*, the joyous song that a fortnight before Christmas is heard in the country air in the evening at three o'clock and at nine.

December 28th, 1839. — It is surprising what a

beautiful sky we are having this winter ! I enjoy it as I take my walk in the sunshine, breathing an air that makes the flowers unfold. The almond-trees are budding and my lilac on the terrace is all covered with buds. Such a feeling of spring is delightful in winter ; but even while I enjoy it I am conscious of a sadness, a regret at not having had this mild weather last year for our poor invalid. Perhaps he would have lived longer, even recovered in this mild warmth, for the air gives us life. The Paris air killed him I believe ; I knew it and yet I could not tempt him away from there. That was one of my keenest sufferings in that past from which I have suffered so much. Poor brother, to me everything is an incline down which I glide to him, everything brings me back to him. But come, I wanted to talk of the sunshine, and here it is quite eclipsed in darkness. So everything I touch turns to mourning, even your remembrance, linked so closely to a tomb. That is what renders me so different from all that goes on in my heart ; it becomes a kind of relic to me. In my mind you have a place by yourself. When I consider our intimacy and what has brought it about, so many events, so many things to draw me forth from my desert, our meeting in Babylon, in that Paris from which I was so far away ; when I see myself such a total stranger, yet so quickly known, so soon understood and a sister to you, a man of the world, to you who took for your sister the very opposite kind of character to your own, who found a friend of your choice, a tie of life in a life the most different from your own ; Oh ! I say there is something marvellous in that, a mystery of Providence in that attachment

that resembles no other. I am bound to you by some divine link, by predestination as you have said. God knows why and with what design he has united us in friendship. Oh ! I long for your happiness, above all that of Heaven. I fear that is hardly within my power, for I believe you are difficult to please in the matter of happiness. And what interest can you have in a poor woman, half retired from this world, half dead, who no longer feels but on the religious side ? You are not religious, my friend. This difference which grieves me might quite well prove wearisome to you, and then our relations would be changed, abandoned. Perhaps I judge you wrongly.

In the wood I found a flower which I plucked and put here in memory of the spring in December. It is a wood - marguerite, one of those in which my mother delighted and which I love for that reason. Our affections spring one out of the other.

December 31st, 1839.—The last day of the year must not pass like another ; it is too full, too solemn and touching, like all that comes to an end, too near to eternity not to affect my soul very deeply. What a day, indeed, what a year, that leaves behind it so many events, so many partings, so many losses, so many tears, and a death upon my heart ! One less among us, one gap in the family circle, in the circle of my affections. That is what time shows us. *So ends a year !* Alas ! alas ! time moves on like water, like the brook I hear flowing under my window, which widens in proportion as its banks sink down. How much of the banks have fallen into the days that are past ! My first loss was my mother, whose death

occurred between my childhood and my youth, and so cast a shadow of mourning between the two ages. From being gay and lively, I turned pensive and thoughtful, my life changed all at once, it was a flower cast into a coffin. From that period dates a development of faith, a religious enthusiasm, a love of God that enraptured me beyond all else and left me what sustains me now, a hope in God that before long yielded consolation. Then I lost a cousin, a friend whom I tenderly loved, the delight of my childhood, who took me on his knee and taught me to read without making me weep, and told me tales. As I grew bigger I made him my elder brother; I entrusted Maurice to his care when he went to Paris. My cousin was in the *Garde du corps*. It is appointed that I shall always have brothers at Paris and that they shall always die there. The former went to the cemetery at Versailles in 1829. I was no longer a child, my heart was buried in these graves; for two or three years I thought only of death, and almost of dying. My poor Victor, he was so like Maurice! Oh! I was afraid they would resemble each other until the end. Both so young, both dead, both killed at Paris! O Lord! these deaths one after the other are terrible and poignant memories. Such are the memories that come crowding back to-day. I see only lost ones, my mother, Victor, Philibert at the Ile de France, Marie in Brittany, Lili at Alby, Laure at Boisset, all affections more or less near to my heart, and now one that swallows up all others, the heart of my heart, Maurice, dead too! How quickly we pass away! Oh! how brief is this world! The earth is but a step on our way. They are waiting for me on high. It is

among these memories of death that I end my day, my last writing, my last thoughts that I leave for you as I left them a year ago this moment to that poor brother. I wrote to him from Nevers, still near Paris and near him. Oh ! how death parts us ! What shall I send him but prayers where he is now ? That shall be my thought now. Prayer is the dew of purgatory. What if his poor soul be in torment there now ! Good-night, you who take his place on earth. I can say nothing more in the way of friendship. I tell you that before God and before him whom I seem to see at my side, smiling upon this adoption of his brother.

January 1st, 1840.—O God ! what will betide me this year ? I know not, and even if I could, I would not raise the curtain of the future. What is hidden there would perhaps be too dreadful : to support the sight of future things one must be either a saint or a prophet. I look upon it as one of the boons of Providence that we cannot see further than one day, further than the moment we exist. If we were not thus limited to the present, what degree would not the soul reach of apprehension and pain, as much for one's self as for those we love ? What do we not feel and suffer in the mere presentiment, that shadow of the future, when it passes over our soul ! At this moment I am free from fear or emotion about anybody ; my year begins in confidence about those I love. My father is very well, Érembert is recovering, Marie has the same roses in her cheeks, and the other Marie, the friend of my tears, the woman of sorrows, bears up with more strength. Thank God for all that. I pray Him to bless and save those that I love. Christians

seek their gifts in Heaven, and I turn for your sake to that quarter, whilst you go into society, into the splendid salons of Paris, to offer smooth words and compliments. If I were there perhaps I should have my share, perhaps I should have a thought, a remembrance, from that brother to whom Maurice has left me as a sister. How beautiful the sky is, this winter sky!

A letter from Louise, a sweet gift from the heart ; but nothing any longer gives me much pleasure, nothing that comes to me can console me for what I have lost. In kissing my father this morning, that poor father who for the first time at New Year did not kiss all his children, I felt very sad. I seemed to see Jacob when he lost Joseph.

Here are written my first thoughts, my first date for 1840, which is bound by ties of sorrow to 1839 and to you.

January 2nd, 1840.—I fly to this diary as an escape from the tiresome New Year's letters that I have to write. The wearisome custom of paying each other compliments for a whole day and sending them by post ! My lazy spirit which prefers reveries to work does not enter very heartily into these flowery compositions. However, one does it because it must be done, but briefly, only a few seasonable words, with good wishes at the beginning or at the end. Those who move in society are clever at this, at smooth and graceful language, but not I ; I am conscious of no facility in gilded, sparkling speech, that verbal tinsel that is seen in society. *In the desert we learn only to think.* I told Maurice when he spoke of Paris,

that I did not understand its language. And yet there are some ways of speaking I understood. Certain souls understand each other in all places. That makes me believe what is said of the saints, that they communicate with the angels, though they are of different nature. The one ascends, the other stoops down, and thus they meet, thus the Son of God descended among us. That reminds me of a passage in one of Abbé Gerbet's books which I love : "*One might say that creation rests on an inclined plane, so that all beings lean towards those that are beneath them, in order to love them and to be loved by them.*" Maurice pointed this thought out to me and we were charmed with it. Dear friend, who knows if he is not bending over me at this moment, over you, over those he loved, to draw them to that lofty sphere where he is now, to raise us from earth to Heaven ! Is it not conceivable that those who go before us into the splendours of life take pity on us, and out of love seek to draw us towards the other world, sending some gleam of faith, some flash of light that had not before shone in the soul ? If I dwelt in the palace of a king and you were in prison, I should certainly send you all I could from the court. So in the celestial sphere, where our affections follow us, doubtless, they take on the divine nature and share God's love for man.

January 4th, 1840.—Some people in the drawing-room, but I leave them that I may rest here for a moment in the presence of God. Oh ! what a feeling of weariness to-day in my soul, but here I find rest. It is like a church, which we enter with calm.

Letters! letters! and not one which shall go into the green portfolio along with those I love, those that belong to my inmost self. Marie cannot be long. I have hurried her so much about Madame de Vaux' affair. When I have to do a favour I like to do it quickly. Two letters have started, for you, for Les Coques, at the time. . . . I must go away.

January 6th, 1840.— . . . At the time when I seemed to maintain silence towards you. I take up my thread, cut short yesterday, which was fastened to the letter-box at Andillac. This box has kept in quarantine for two days the last letter I sent you. By this time you should have received it at Port Mahon, where no doubt other souvenirs in less haste to arrive than mine have been delivered. How little this box at Andillac knows what it contains! It is placed near the church, beside the cemetery, and that seems a very suitable place for it, this resting-place of the heart and of human affairs, of so many things which go on their way only after having rested near God. That may quite well have some happy results, and some hand bearing an evil missive may have drawn back at the thought of the holy place. Who that has any faith would do evil at the door of a church? This box in the sacred wall might check many who write with evil intention, as is not uncommon even in our rural parts where people have learned to write. From great to small, the moral choice in all things would have a greater importance than we think. As for me, when I drop my beloved letters into the box, I feel I must say, "Into God's keeping!" I write to many people, as I have, some

way or another, a large correspondence. There has grown up around us a large plantation of cousins, young girls full of love and chatter, bound to us in heart and spirit, so that I have to reply to all their chatter. Then Louise, who speaks from her heart, Marie, given me by God, Félicité, who loves me and took care of Maurice, Caroline, my sister, Maurice's wife, and others still, beyond number ; and in all these, among so many letters, there are three that make all others seem insignificant, two from women and one in big handwriting that seems delicate in my eyes.

January 7th, 1840.—A letter from Marie, death of the Archbishop of Paris.—Such are the evening notes of an eventful day. Incidents succeed each other in life with a rapidity that hardly allows us to grasp them.—Even I see that in my desert where so little happens in comparison with the outer world.

January 9th, 1840.—What will happen to-day? A piece of good fortune, something from Marie, the present she promises me, a mysterious box that the diligence is bringing me. I am longing to get it, to open it and see what my friend sends. After some affectionate words she says, "You will understand when you have seen the box." That "you will understand" puts me in an expectant mood. What can it be? Books, music, dress? Dress? no ; Marie knows what I require, and that I should have more pleasure in the smallest things of the heart than in all the finery in the world. My Paris dresses are all I want, but the soul never has too many garments.

I should like books, something in which I could wrap up my thoughts all benumbed with the cold of this world, when I come forth from prayer, from pious meditation. That cannot last all day, and I am unhappy when I have no book to take refuge in. *Notre-Dame de Paris* that I ordered has not yet come. They have brought me St Augustine's *The City of God*, too learned a work for me. It may be that something is to be gleaned in all places, but these lofty heights of theology do not suit me. I love to wander in the plain or on the gentle slope of some author who speaks to the soul, who is within my reach, like M. Sainte-Beuve, for example, in whom I delighted last winter at Paris, and who greatly amused your playful gravity. It was you, nevertheless, or someone of you who was the cause of my reading *Volupté*, because Maurice told me that it had converted your brother and sent him into the seminary. What a strange book, I thought, to produce such effects! I must see it, and my curiosity has not been disappointed. There are charming details, delightful little pictures, truths of the heart.

X

January 9, 1840.—The end of my last note-book cut short M. Sainte-Beuve ; I resume on your account and for your sake my talking and writing, this sisterly journal which is continued for him who has taken Maurice's place, *with my beliefs, convictions, reflections, which are the consequence, my way of living and feeling, this interchange of thoughts that you would not like changed*, as you have just told me, and as I have just read amidst the sunshine in the wood at Sept Fonts, the place where I used to go with Maurice. It is there I often used to read his letters, as I have just read yours, alone before God. According to what I read and the state of these poor brothers, I pray or thank God, and return folding in my pocket and in my heart this dear writing. Yours has not grieved me very much to-day ; you seem less depressed than usual, and this sentence, "I am sometimes religious through reason," gratified me. Let us hope ! Faith of the heart may come, perhaps you will one day be religious by feeling as well. It is the effect of grace, and we beseech it for you ; two hundred leagues from Paris, in a desert, there is a soul that begs from God the salvation of a soul. The

affection that descends upon us from Heaven and ascends again is very strong. It is charity that would move Heaven and earth for one chosen spirit. You will understand me. Maurice filled a great part of my heart; since he is taken away, God fills his empty place, and soon all will be pervaded, all in me will be borne upwards, like the rainbow over the waters—all that has escaped the deluge.

January 10th, 1840.—A day of privations, I had almost resolved not to write; but the sight of this white paper tempts my hand, which lets itself glide softly over it and records a restful mood that is far from common. I read the life of St Paul, the hermit, who after a hundred years of solitude asked what was going on in the world. Some day, but probably not so late in life, I may ask the same question; for I no longer think of leaving here, of coming forth from the depths of Le Cayla where God has placed me, where I am content, and want for nothing, where my needs are provided for by some providential and unexpected means, as Paul's were by the miraculous crow. Is that not as true for the life of the heart as for the other? I have always needed friendship, and from Heaven there have come to me some rare friendships, not to be found by seeking, which can neither be made nor imagined; first of all in my brother Maurice, whom I have lost. Louise came earlier in point of time. She appealed to a different side of my nature, fruit of another season. I met her at the age of seventeen. Her charm is unique, like the age when we formed these ties, and, though sorrows have supervened, we see each other through

flowers. Rayssac, the charming scene where I look back upon my youth, and in the distance under the same aspect Le Cayla with a grave.

For me now all ends there, and is bound to that spot. That is why I should not like to go away, that I may for ever watch over this dear tomb. Yet my gaze does not remain fixed there ; it rises to Heaven, where is the better part of him I mourn, to the sky that is visible everywhere, so that, wherever I may be, I can always see the place where Maurice is. If God called me elsewhere I should go ; the thought of this grave would not turn me from any duty of charity, or friendship, or vocation, wherever it might be. Is a Christian limited to any one place ?

January 11th, 1840.—Oh ! Marie, Marie ! What a woman, so warm, so delicate, so thoughtful in her friendship ! I recognise her own charming self in the long-expected box, filled to the top with objects *chosen by her for me*. Above all how much I like the statuette of the Virgin ! That celestial envoy brings me so many thoughts of Heaven !

January 19th, 1840.—Yesterday I wrote you a long and frank letter, just as I would have done to him, in the language that my thoughts naturally take. I cannot change myself, it would seem, as I have never hidden any of my feelings. And why should I, when there is no risk of giving displeasure or of compromising myself ? I send you in all security my thoughts, my life : the greatest mark of confidence a woman can give, one which places the object of her confidence very high in her esteem.

Six months, six months to-day since that death, that separation ! O Lord ! how swift is time ! It seems to me as if it were yesterday. How is it that so many incidents, painful or otherwise, relating to that dear friend, seem infinitely far off ? So it is with his last departure from home, my arrival at Paris, his marriage, and yet how near, how recent his death seems ! I see him : it is six months ago, and yet it seems as if it were no time at all, the mind brings it back so vividly. The soul knows neither time nor space ; that shows clearly our spiritual nature. Oh ! so much better, so much better that we are not limited by time, so short and so sad ; and that we are not wholly confined in this frail body ! We must agree that faith opens out fair prospects to our eyes. But how painful it is to think that there are some who only look on those, without ever reaching and possessing them through the joys of another life, alas ! as will befall those poor Christians in name, without deeds, without the practice of faith ! It is martyrdom to have friends like this.

January 21st, 1840.—Poor Louis XVI.! When I was a child I used to venerate this martyr, I loved this victim, of whom I heard so much at home when January 21st drew near. We were taken to the memorial service in the church, and I looked earnestly at the lofty catafalque, the dreary throne of the worthy king. My wonder filled me with pain and indignation ; I came out weeping over that death and hating the miscreants who were the cause. How many hours I have spent wondering

by what means I could have saved Louis XVI., the queen, and all the unhappy family, if I had lived in their time ! When I had planned and calculated to the utmost, almost nothing suggested itself, and with deep regret I abandoned these prisoners. The pretty little Dauphin above all excited my compassion, the poor child immured within walls, unable to play in freedom. This latter I carried off, and hid here at Le Cayla. Heaven knows what a delight it was to run about the fields with a prince. How many dreams about that unhappy family.

There are two classes of men who inspire me with repulsion : regicides and infidels. However dissipated a young man may be, I have always a certain respect for him if he retains his religion. I have noticed with deep satisfaction that in the correspondence of *Malise Allen* with Georges, there is not one jest against religion. Oh ! how that comforted me ! How much hope I rested on that remnant of good ! I was not mistaken about Georges ; as for Malise, I know not, the future will show us. Still he is a famous sinner, a sort of Augustine, whom God has to conquer against the opposition of the world.

January 22nd, 1840.—There are days when the soul turns back more than of wont to the past, and dwells upon what it has lost. It finds satisfaction in these visions ; though they are sad, we keep them before us, we linger over them, and live in the shadow of what we have loved. All to-day that dear pale face has passed and repassed before my eye, that beautiful head leans on me in all its attitudes, smiling, eloquent, ill, dying ; above all I

dwel, I know not why, over the scene at the Abbé Legrand's, the vicar of the parish, when we went to speak to him about the arrangements for the marriage. I am back again in that little salon, decorated with crosses, with religious engravings, beautiful furniture and beautiful books, all of exquisite and pious taste. There I was brimming over with words, with a business-like air; Maurice, placid in countenance and voice, in an armchair, now and then letting fall a few words; the Abbé talking brilliantly, agreeably surprised when by chance I mentioned the Abbé de Rivières, one of our neighbours, whom he had known at Saint Sulpice. I see all that again, and when, introducing the religious aspect of the matter that had brought us there, the Abbé touched with perfect tact upon the Christian preparations, Maurice replied as a man who understands and believes. Both the Abbé and I were touched, perhaps surprised. I noticed everything, and it has all remained in my memory. I could picture the young priest, and the Christian bridegroom at that moment. Maurice was perfect. Dearly loved brother!

January 23rd, 1840.—Why do the tears come this morning? Why this relapse into sorrow and anguish? Ask the sick man why his pain returns! Our sufferings are only suspended for the time; if I were near a church I would try to find solace there, to be lost, absorbed in communion. My whole support is in this act of faith and love, my whole life, even the life of the body, perhaps. God takes me to himself; what cannot this all-powerful love accomplish in the soul it possesses! First, it can console it for the suffering that its love entails.

January 24th, 1840. — These words are very mystical, incomprehensible, perhaps, to one who has not the pious sense of an ineffable sacrament, a mystery of divine love, the most wonderful gift from God to man. All that one could say about it is nonsense for worldly people, but this is not for such people, and recluses can put on paper what they wish. This book contains the secret printing of my soul, in it I trace all its characters. Sometimes I say to myself, "What is the good? To whom will these pages be of use? They had a value only for Maurice, who found his sister in them again. What does it avail me to find myself there again?" But if I find in it a harmless distraction, if I enjoy there a brief respite from the fatigues of the day, if I put there, just for the sake of putting them there, the flowers of my desert that I gather in solitude, my thoughts and doings, what God gives me for enlightenment or support: Oh! there is surely no harm. And if some new occupant of my cell finds this and finds a good thought, if he appreciates it and is made better, be it only for a moment, I shall have done good. I wish to do good. No doubt I fear to waste time, that *price of eternity*; but is it lost if we employ it for our own soul or for another? Besides, what have I to do but sew and spin? If my fingers were useful for housekeeping I would not put them here, I have never sacrificed duty to pleasure. But since my good sister is willing to take upon herself these material cares, since she frees me from them with equal kindness and intelligence, since she is Martha, I can quite well be Mary. Ah! how this agreeable part is to my taste! Sometimes

when all is noise and bustle in the house, and I hear it from the calm of my little room, the contrast delights me ; in my lofty retreat I have somewhat the feeling of Stylites on his pillar. But, chatterer that I am ! here I am far from my first sentence, from my holy thought. Oh ! the currents of the soul, who will follow them ? We trace them back to their source. I shall find this one again some other time.

January 25th, 1840.—Just the right thing to put here ! a letter from my dear Marie, at my bedside, on wakening this morning. Dawn of a beautiful day, within me as well as without me ; sunshine in the sky and in my soul. Thank God for these sweet gleams that revive us in the midst of sorrow ! I know too well that it will recommence, but we have reposed for a moment and go on our way afterwards with more strength. Life is long, and from time to time we need some cordial for our march ; some comes to me from Heaven, some from the earth, I take them all, all are good for me ; for God gives them, He who gives life and dew ! Books of piety, prayer, and meditation strengthen us ; friendly words also sustain us. I need them : there is a side of our heart that leans on what we love ; friendship is something that goes arm in arm. How tenderly Marie gives me hers, and what pleasure I have in it ! So we shall go on until death : *God has joined us.*

January 26th, 1840.—Two years ago, here, in the same place, in the very room whence he had just

gone, I was weeping. Never had his departure crushed my spirit to the same degree, it seemed as though I had a presentiment that it would be the last. He too felt it more, and was more constrained than usual. These six months with us, being an invalid and the object of so much affection, he had formed a strong attachment to this place. Five years without seeing us had, perhaps, made him a little forgetful of our tenderness; but when he tasted it again all his old affection came back; when he left us he had renewed all the family ties so strongly that death alone could have broken them. He had given me this assurance. His errors were past, the illusions of his heart had vanished; by necessity, by temperament he had returned to serious thoughts. I knew all, I followed his steps; from the fiery circle of the passions (for him it was a brief one), I saw him pass into that of Christian virtue. Maurice's was a beautiful soul. God had withdrawn it from the earth to receive it into Heaven. Alas! how that all comes back to me, how I am followed, surrounded by it to-day, the mournful anniversary of our separation! From that day our confidential relations were broken or suspended: he was going away. . . .

If he had waited here, and passed that fatal winter at Le Cayla, the poor youth would not have died. The Paris air was evidently bad for him, he fell ill again immediately on his arrival; then so many things turned out unfortunately! There followed a chain of circumstances and events which brought him to his grave, and without our knowing how to avoid it. Oh! fatality! if I believed in fatality. But no,

it is God who leads us, God in all His goodness, though nature groans aloud, though we are all unhappy, without knowing why. Do we understand the mystery of anything? The mystery of suffering makes me believe that there is something to expiate, something to gain. I see it in Jesus Christ, *the man of sorrows. The Son of Man had to suffer.* That is all we know amidst the trials and calamities of life. The reason of things is in God. It is the secret of ruling that the Ruler keeps to Himself. To submit to our fate is to join our will to His, to render it divine, to raise it as high as man can reach. Thus I find in the act of Christian resignation, that might seem a passive acceptance, a yielding to necessity, I find in this, I say, the most sublime act of the soul. It is all made up of Faith, it raises us in a moment from earth to Heaven. If all the sorrowful believed in God, not with the belief that we find in the world, but that we find in the catechism, we would not see so many suicides. Oh ! suicide, how it makes me shudder !

January 27th, 1840.—Three sweet hours spent in writing to Marie. My heart prompts me to note this. I record all her letters and mine, so that I may recall the days when we have talked, these landmarks in our lives. Nothing is dearer to me than these effusions of friendship. All, except what touches my inner self, passes away in my life without stirring any emotions. All things connected with business, the doings of the world, all news is indifferent to me ; I have no longer any part in what happens on earth. My body is here, but my soul is in the sky. This

small book is the only thing for which I turn aside a little from my accustomed thoughts. And yet I do this to give them rest.

To-day one of our cousins is being married at Gaillac. She wanted us to go to her wedding, but I am done with weddings! I cannot tell you how much this invitation, the sight of these rejoicings, has saddened me.

January 28th, 1840.—I have spent much time to-day over St Francis de Sales, whom Rousseau called the most lovable of the saints. This is the festival that I particularly love, the one I celebrate in my heart in reading his beautiful life, in thinking of the things he has done, conversions, writings, the twenty years' struggle against anger, the divine sweetness amidst that ardour, capable of being compared to the Saviour of the world, ineffable marks of charity, delightful sayings such as this, "It is better not to utter a truth, than to utter it with a bad grace," overflowing tenderness of the heart, a maternal compassion for sinners, in short, a thousand celestial qualities, a thousand pearls that crown the brow of that blessed saint, attract my soul to this festival, make me love him, venerate him, invoke him more than any other. The heart has its elect in Heaven also, and the happiness of those at least does not entail sorrow. I must tell all: to my spiritual predilection there is joined a certain human predilection for this saint, the de M.'s are connected with the de Sales. Marie is a relation of St Francis, so that friendship and saintliness are like a relic to me, and are enshrined ineffably in each other's hearts.

February 1st, 1840.—We have had people with us for the last two days; now they are gone and I ascend once more to my solitude with three letters from friends, and a feeling of regret at our visitors' departure. One of these visitors was Maurice's confessor, the worthy M. Fieuzet, who comes from time to time to pray at that tomb and to see how we are in our sadness. This priest has a heart full of the most saintly tenderness, concealing under the austerity of his office the sweetest of natures, the Gospel printed on velvet. I was greatly consoled to see him at Maurice's deathbed. What am I about to recall? Oh! may such a priest, such a holy priest be near me in my last moments! So my diary is filled with sadness and mourning and visions of death: my whole life now passes away on this dark background with just a gleam of brightness in the sky.

February 3rd, 1840.—They are pressing me to go to Gaillac. No; I cannot tear myself away from here; a small life in a small place pleases me most, there where I have my dear ones, living and dead.

February 4th, 1840.—I ought to write a letter, but I prefer to wag my pen here; here from inclination, elsewhere from expediency, but expediency is very cold. The heart finds no satisfaction in it, but turns away and withdraws as far as it can. When duties are not concerned I let it have its way. As for the letter I shall write it; besides it is a trifling matter, and it does not require a great effort to overcome a brief feeling of weariness. There are such long ones

we must put up with until the very end. The ones make us used to the others. The little struggles lead on to the great ones and accustom us to them. These things we do against our inclination are good for us, like something bitter, they stimulate our will to take them and thus strengthen it. If everything we did was sweet and pleasant what would become of us at last, in the dreadful shock of death? It is good to look forward to that. Hence it is that the saints and recluses, these men who understand the soul so well, devote themselves to sacrifice and privation voluntarily, and suffer death each day in the mere prospect that death must come. Thus they go forth from the world without bitterness. I have been told of a young girl, a nun at Alby, who began to weep with joy when she heard the doctors saying to each other that there was no more hope.

Somehow or other, at the time of the cholera, I used to think of death as a boon, I envied all those who were breathing their last. This made such an impression on me that I even spoke of it to my confessor. Was it the languor of youth, or was it the longing for Heaven? I know not. One thing is sure, that has passed away, or nearly so. In regard to death I am conscious of a feeling of submission, sometimes of fear, rarely of longing. We change with time. It is not in this alone I perceive I am growing old. When I have white hair I shall be quite different again. Oh! human metamorphosis, to grow old and ugly! To console ourselves for that, we need the belief in a resurrection! How faith helps us in all things! Yes, for so many women who worship their bodies, and rejoice in their beauty,

this thought of the resurrection would be consoling when their charms begin to fade ; and perhaps more than one fair Christian, of those who sorrow over their faces, have recourse to it. She, for example, who said, "To die is nothing, but to die disfigured !" The mere thought was insupportable for her. Poor woman ! I laughed then, at present I am sorry for her, I grieve to see that we do not raise our soul higher than our body. Who knows ? If I were pretty, perhaps I should do the same.

February 5th, 1840.—What a book, what friendship, what a death, what a union ! It has made a profound impression on my mind. I refer to the last moments of Étienne de la Boétie that I came across in a book by Montaigne. Knowing how much these two men loved each other, I was touched to learn how they parted, and my heart is in tears. It is so awful to see anyone die, especially when this death recalls to you another death ! How many salient points have struck me in this life so soon ended, in this soul departing from the world so young, so beautiful, so noble, so Christian, so exquisite in its sweetness and friendship ! Oh ! truly the fine passages have reminded me of Maurice, and of you both in the close and deep union of these two friends. But you were absent in the last moments of your friend. How I regret it, and regret that distance should have parted you in these last days ! I wish to tell you how they passed, for that is lacking to the details that I gave you of his death, and is due to the interest you have shown in the end of that life.

But first I wish to place here the memory of what happened to-day at that tomb. It was still bare, simply covered with turf; and to cover it suitably and to keep it for ever, a white marble grave-stone has been placed on it, surmounted by a cross. The poor widow has sent this last sad offering of love, and had the inscription put on herself. I have not seen it yet. Oh! I shall be there soon enough! Shall we not go every Sunday, all of us, to pray beside our poor Maurice? And you, his brother too, will you never come and kneel there? How I should like to see you praying for him. "These are the best services that Christians can perform for each other," said the dying Étienne de la Boétie to his friend Montaigne. I doubt not that Maurice would say the same, if he could make you hear him. He also was a soul that believed from the bottom of his heart, a soul of the olden times, over which hurrying time might pass unhappily, but could only pass. You will see by what follows.

February 11th, 1840.—I have left off writing for several days. It costs me suffering to commence this painful story, to speak of this death, though I think of it without ceasing. Methinks there are memories that rend the heart more in coming forth than remaining buried in it. Even sorrow takes on a certain sweetness and with time deposits at the bottom of the heart a kind of sandy bed on which it sinks to sleep. Soon after that death I spoke of it without excessive pain; at present when we recur to that subject, when in our family circle our talk turns on it, I feel a pang in my soul.

Last night the tomb-stone had to be guarded on account of some peasants from Andillac who did not wish to let it be placed there. They think that it offends the equality of death, and having the authority, offered a violent opposition. Poor sovereign people ! that is what we must suffer from them, that is the use they make of their power. In past times all would have saluted reverently this cross that they speak of throwing down to-day, in this age of enlightenment. Unhappy time, when respect for holy things is lost, when the lowest are filled with pride, until they rebel against the mournful raising of a tomb ! The peasant whose mind has reached this state has no longer any real worth ; partly the result of reading. Therefore how much better that the labourer should have a rosary rather than a book in his pocket.

It was about six o'clock in the evening of the 8th of July, twenty days after we left Paris, that we came in sight of Le Cayla, the land of promise, our poor invalid's place of repose. For a long time his thoughts had centered round that one spot. I have never seen him long for anything more eagerly, with an eagerness that grew as we drew near to it. One would have said he was impatient to arrive, that he might be in time to die there. Had he a presentiment of his end ? In the first transports of his joy, at the sight of Le Cayla, he pressed Érembert's hand, who was near him. He motioned to us all as if he had made a discovery, to me who had never felt less pleasure than at that moment ! At this mournful home-coming, I looked on all things with eyes of sadness, even on my father, even on my sister, who came a short way to

meet us. What a painful meeting ! My father was dismayed ; Marie wept when she saw Maurice. He was so changed, so wasted and pale, so unsteady on his horse which he sat in the English fashion, that he seemed lifeless. It was dreadful. The journey had killed him. But for the thought of his arrival, which kept him up, I doubt if he would have accomplished it. You know something of it, and what he must have suffered, poor dear martyr ! But I wish to speak only of what took place here. He kissed his father and sister without showing too much emotion. He seemed in a sort of ecstasy from the moment he caught sight of the chateau ; the shock that it caused him was remarkable, and must have used up his faculty of sensation ; since then I have never again seen him look so deeply affected. Yet he greeted affectionately the harvesters who were cutting our corn, reached out his hand to some of them, and to all the servants who clustered round us.

When we came into the salon he said, " Ah ! how comfortable one is here ! " and sitting down on the couch, he began to embrace my father, whom he could only reach with his lips when on horseback. We were all intent on watching his satisfaction. That was still another family joy. His wife left the room to unpack some baggage ; I took her place beside him, and kissing his brow, which I had not done for a long time, I said to him, " Why, my dear, how well you look ! Here you will soon get well. " " I hope so. . . . I am at home. " " Your wife too must make herself at home ; let her understand she is one of the family, and may do as if she were in her own house. " " Surely, surely. " I cannot recall more of the other

things we said to one another, these few moments we were by ourselves. Caroline came downstairs, supper was announced, which Maurice thought exquisite. He tasted everything with good appetite. "Ah," he said to Marie, "how good your cooking is! . . ."

Heavens! how that past clings to my heart! I have no life but in it. I have no future but by faith, no ties but those that are bound to Maurice, and from him to Heaven.

I was the first of the family to see the monument this morning. So it happened; but he and I, were we not always the first to meet, and did we not stand alone? That still remains the same, and now, alas! our meetings are at a grave. I was kneeling alone beside that grave, opposite the white stone where I read his name and his death: MAURICE. 19th July.

But let us come back to his life, to what remains to me of these last precious memories. Oh! why did I not write then! Oh! why did I not write then whilst he spoke to us, whilst he was passing away! Why did I not keep a journal of his last moments, a priceless record, of which this is but the shadow! To recall is not to see; the most vivid details are dead, though the heart preserves them. Were not all my thoughts of him? Did I even think that he was to die? When I revert to these memories I cease to understand myself.

We had great hopes from the climate, his native air, the warm temperature of our South. On the second day of our arrival it turned cold; the invalid felt it and shivered. The tips of his fingers and his nose were icy cold, and made me afraid; I saw clearly that there was not all the improvement we

hoped for, that he would not recover so quickly, since the attacks kept returning. Then he had not a high temperature, and the doctor reassured us. These doctors are often deceived and often deceive others. We persuaded the invalid not to leave his room next day, attributing his feeling of cold to some chilliness of the salon. Though vexed, he submitted in his usual indifferent way, to what we wanted ; but he felt things so tiresome up there and grew so hot in a little while that I myself induced him to come down again. "Oh ! yes," he said to me, "here I am so far from everywhere. There is more life down there with you all, and then the terrace, I could walk there. Let us go down." The terrace above all tempted him to enjoy the open air, the sunshine, that beautiful nature that he loved so much. I believe it was that day he pulled up some weeds round the pomegranate tree, and dug up a few feet of *belle-de-nuit* ; with the aid of his wife he stretched a wire along the wall over some jasmine and vines. That seemed to amuse him. "I shall try my strength this way a little each day," he said as he came in. He returned no more to the garden. The weakness came upon him, the least movements fatigued him. He never left his armchair except from necessity, or to take a few steps at the request of his wife, who tried all things to rouse him from his lethargy. She sang, played, and often without avail. At least I did not perceive that it made the least impression on him. He remained the same through it all, his head resting on the side of his armchair, his eyes closed.

Yet there were brief improvements, spasmodic signs of life. It was in one of these moments that he sat

down at the piano and played over an air, poor air that I shall keep for ever in my heart. That piano went away to Toulouse. I saw it leave with all the regretful associations that Maurice had impressed on it. I should have liked to mark these words on it, "Here a young invalid sang his last song." Perhaps some hand passing over its keys would have paused in prayer. Dear departed soul, I would fain bring it help from all quarters. *They are the best offices Christians can perform for each other.* I come back to these pious words of Montaigne's friend, which recur so often to my heart.

I wish to tell you also how that dear brother left me reason for consolation in his Christian sentiments. This does not date from his last days only; he had kept Easter at Paris. At the beginning of Lent he wrote to me: "The Abbé Buquet has come to see me; to-morrow he is coming again to talk with me as you meant to do." I had meant that for his happiness, and he had done it for mine, not yielding through good nature but acting from *conviction*: he was incapable of merely pretending to believe. I have seen him alone in his room at Tours, reading prayers for the mass one Sunday. For some time he had been fond of reading devotional works, and I congratulated myself on having left him St Theresa and Fénelon, who have done him so much good. God never ceased to inspire me on his account. So the thought occurred to me to carry with us for the journey a good little book, pious and delightful to read, translated from the Italian of Father Quadrupani, which gave him great pleasure. From time to time he asked me to read him a page: "Read me a little

of Quadrupani." He listened with attention, then, making a sign when he had heard enough, he pondered over it, closed his eyes and let these comforting and holy words sink into his heart. At Le Cayla every day we read to him some of Bossuet's sermons, and some passages of the *Imitation*. To this he wished to add some amusing reading, and we began Scott's *Old Mortality*, having nothing new in our library. He glanced through one volume of it with a certain air of interest, and then left it off. He soon grew weary of everything, we could find nothing that gave him pleasure. Visits brought him little distraction; he talked only with his doctor, a man of intelligence, who by this quality pleased the invalid and sustained his attention. I noticed these moral influences, and how in the deepest dejection, that intellectual nature revealed itself whenever it was brought into contact with its like. So one or two days before his death, though quite exhausted, he began to laugh heartily at your witty and pleasant pamphlet, *Youth Must Pass*. He was charmed with it, and wanted it read twice. "Write to D'Aurevilly," he said to me, "that for a long time I have not laughed at anything as I have done at this." Alas! he laughed no more! You gave him the last intellectual pleasure he had. He delighted in everything that came from you. Friendship was the sweetest and strongest of his feelings, that which he felt most deeply, of which he loved most to speak, and which he took with him, I may say, to his grave. Oh! yes, *he loved you to the end*. When we were alone on one occasion, speaking of you, I said, "Are you pleased, dear, that I should write to your

friend?" "Yes, I am pleased," he replied in a tone of emotion. That very day, when I left him, I sent you a report of his health.

He seemed very weak, yet I went on hoping. I had written to Prince Hohenloe. I was expecting a miracle. The cough had abated, his appetite kept up; on the eve of the fatal day he dined with us again; alas! the last family dinner! We had figs on the table, and he wanted some. On his asking my advice I was so cruel as to forbid them; but others having approved of them, he ate one, and it did him neither good nor harm, and I was saved without prejudice from the bitterness of having deprived him of something. I would like to tell all, to record everything about his last hours, and am deeply grieved that I cannot recall more. One remark that he made to my father remains in my memory. Our poor father was coming back from Gaillac at the hottest time of the day, bringing him medicines. As soon as Maurice saw him he held out his hand and said, "It must be admitted that you love your children well." Oh! indeed my father loved him well! Soon after, the poor invalid rose from his chair to go into the adjoining room. "I am very low," he said, as though speaking to himself. I heard this death-sentence from his own lips, but made no reply, and perhaps hardly believed it was true, though I was struck by it. That evening he was carried in his chair into his room. While he was getting into bed, I said to Érembert, "He is very weak to-night; but his chest is freer, the cough is going away. If we could go on till the month of October he would be saved." It was then July 18th, ten o'clock in the evening.

He spent a bad night. I heard his wife speaking to him, and getting up often. I could hear everything from my room, and I listened intently. As soon as it was possible, I went in the morning to see him, and his look struck me. There was a certain fixedness about it. "What does that mean?" I asked the doctor who arrived at once. "It means that Maurice is worse." "Oh! Heavens!" Érembert went to warn my father, who came hurriedly. He went out soon after, and having consulted with the doctor, the latter intimated that we must think of the last sacrament. The curé was sent for, as well as my sister who was at the church. I do not know if I can recall everything. My father begged M. Facien, the doctor, to prepare Caroline for the terrible news. He took her aside. I went to her soon after, and found her in tears. I heard her say, "I knew it." She knew that he was dying! "For three months I have prepared myself for the sacrifice." So this shock of death did not terrify her, but I saw she was heart-broken.

"My poor sister," I said to her, putting my arms round her neck, "this is the terrible moment; but do not let us weep, we must tell Maurice, and prepare him for the sacrament. Do you feel strong enough to fulfil this duty, or do you wish that I should do it?" "Yes, you do it, Eugénie, you do it!" She was choking with sobs. I went then from the salon to his bedside, and praying God to sustain me, I bent over him and kissed his brow, which was quite damp. "My friend," I said, "I have something to tell you. I have written about you to Prince Hohenloe." "Oh! how good that was of you!" "You know that he

has performed miracles of healing, especially at Alby, in a family who have just told me of it. God works as He wills and through whom He wills. He is the sovereign remedy for the sick. Have you every confidence in him?" "*Supreme* confidence (or *full*, I cannot remember which)." "Well, my friend, let us ask Him in all confidence for His grace, let us join in prayer, we at the church, you in your heart. A mass is to be said, and we shall take the sacrament; you could take it also. Jesus Christ comes to the sick." "Oh! yes, I should like to join my prayers to yours." "Very well, my friend, the Curé will soon be here, and you will confess. You will have no difficulty about speaking to the Curé?" "None at all." "Then you will get ready for confession." He asked for a prayer book and made his wife read all the prayers that precede confession. I left the room, and went to get ready some *fecula* with almond milk. Meanwhile the Curé arrived. The invalid begged him to wait a little longer, saying he did not feel sufficiently prepared. We could see that he was deeply moved and thoughtful. Alas! the last meditation of his soul! At the end of about ten minutes, he sent for the priest and remained with him for nearly half an hour, talking, we were told, with all the same ease and clearness of mind as if he had been quite well. "I have never heard confession better made," the Curé told us. What gives me full assurance as to his state of mind, is his action when the Curé was going away. He called him back to speak about M. de Lamennais, and to make a last full renunciation of his doctrines. Then he added, "M. le Curé, perhaps I am wrong, but do you not think I am very

ill? Then, I shall receive extreme unction. As for taking the sacrament, I should like to take it fasting, and so I shall wait till to-morrow." On the Curé's replying that the sick were exempted from fasting, he was ready for all and prepared himself for the last sacrament. We were coming and going, my sister and I, making the proper arrangements in the room, which was to be turned into a church. His wife, with the sadness and piety of an angel, was reading him the prayers for communion, which are so beautiful, and those for the dying, which are so touching; he himself, calmly and naturally, as if for something quite expected, asked the prayers for extreme unction.

Yet he was hungry and faint, and asked me for his *fecula*, which I brought him. As he was sweating much, I said to him, "My dear, don't put out your arm, I shall feed you like a baby." A smile passed over his lips, as I put the spoon to them, and poured in the last food he took. So I was able to serve him once more, and to take care of him just as before. Dying he was given back to me. I observed as a favour granted by God to my sisterly love, that I performed for that dear brother the last services to body and soul; that by a strange coincidence I prepared him for the last sacrament, and got ready his last food; nourishment of both lives. That seems nothing, and is nothing for anyone else; I am the only one to remark it and to thank Providence for those ties with dear Maurice that were joined again before we parted. Mournful and strange compensation for so many months of passive friendship! Was I wrong in wishing to serve him? I know not. But I wish to complete this painful story of death; let us

leave the heart out of account, there would be no end to its story.

When the holy viaticum was brought the invalid seemed better ; his eyes were open again and had lost the fixed look that terrified me in the morning, his senses had regained something of their power. He seemed more vigorous in mind and in full possession of his faculties during all the time of the holy ceremonies, following everything with the most earnest piety. When extreme unction was administered he put out only one hand. The priest said, "The other," and he held it out briskly. He listened to the touching and simple words, and received the holy viaticum with every expression of faith. He was still alive, he heard our voices, and chose water in preference to the tisane that was offered him. He grasped the hand of the Curé, who spoke to him of Heaven all the time, and he pressed his lips to the cross that his wife held up to him ; then his strength ebbed. Whilst we kissed him in turn, he slowly passed away at half-past eleven, on Friday morning, July 18th, 1839, eleven days after our arrival at Le Cayla, eight months after his marriage.

Such was the end of that life, so closely bound to yours, such as I have been able to picture for you amidst my tears. And to think that you were not there, that you were not present at the Christian death of your friend !

February 27th, 1840.—*Here we are at last!* as Billy, the charming Indian child, said when he saw me returning. He seemed quite delighted, just as I am at your letter, so long in coming and so much

desired. Still it was but a somewhat long silence that caused me such fears of death. It is because at present I am so quick to believe in death! Now I am quite reassured. But what are our impressions? In certainty I do not feel as I feel amidst doubt, a deep feeling. In me pleasure does not go so deep as pain.

This has been a happy day; I am still waiting for my father, who has now been away for a whole week. His presence is more necessary to me, now that I find myself lonelier than ever at Le Cayla. Whilst I watch the direction that he must come, I think of so many absent ones who will never come back. I have seen many go away by that road. At the foot of the hill there is a cross where two years ago we parted with my dear Maurice. I went so far with him. The ground retained for a long time the mark of the horse's foot at the place where Maurice stopped to stretch out his hand to me. I never pass that way without looking for the lost mark of our farewell beside the cross.

How all my life goes out to that brother, how everything connected with him affects me! In solitude the one feeling of our life grows to immensity. Like the lonely chestnut-tree that spreads its boughs down there in the meadow, it covers all the soul. Perhaps I would do well to leave here for some days. The fixed ideas, oh! the fixed ideas that are nourished and recalled by all things! Life is a duty. From religious considerations we cling to it, and we should seek to preserve it. To pine away would be a crime in God's eyes. But for that, nevertheless, but for the sky that I behold, I should

let myself sink down. Still I would be wrong, as a Christian I would be very wrong to be despondent like those who go their way without support. Is not God there who tells us, "I am near those who suffer?" The faith that sustains! Oh! how much we owe to faith! I look on it as the one true support of man. Other things may have the appearance; but they are unreal supports, columns of mist.

MONTELS, an old chateau in the mountains.

March 14th, 1840.—The things I love follow me everywhere: this diary travels my road, as, alas! another diary came here too, not long ago, when I was going to see my friend Louise shortly before my departure for Paris. Thus sometimes the same things repeat themselves in life, without our thinking of recalling them. Certainly I did not expect to return here. I have noticed these agreements of the past and the present, but there is this contrast. I had come here in joy, I return in mourning; I had a brother living, now he is dead.

I am happy at Montels; here we live as we please, without tiresome society visits; we come in, go out, walk about without restraint; then the country is wide, with every variety of landscape, gentle mountain slopes covered with chestnut-trees; it is a pleasure to see them and to wander through them. If I had to leave Le Cayla, it is here I should like to live. To make this chateau a pleasant home, one needs only to restore some ruins, which even now are full of interest. What a charm about that old salon hung with old portraits of soldiers, lawyers, priests, fair

ladies, such as we no longer see, with their dresses and their beauty ! I noticed one lady in a ball-dress beside a monk meditating over a death's head. In all times extremes have met. Everywhere about Montels it is the same, the house and its inmates, that room called the cardinal's room, because the cardinal lived in it ; now it is filled with potatoes.

I am not surprised that that choice spirit, with such good taste for pretty things, should have chosen this spot for his country house, near enough and yet far enough from the town, a scene perfectly fitted for pastorals and poetic reveries, if the cardinal still indulged in reveries. Who knows at what time and in what state one ceases to be a poet. He, nevertheless, in the course of his life, remembering that he was a priest, repented of his light poems and searched them out in order to destroy them ; but from the pen to the wind. Harm does not stop when we wish. The epistles to Chloë and La Pompadour remain, and we hardly know whether their author wished to reduce them to ashes. I have this from my father, whose father had known this Apollo of a cardinal.

There is still in an old drawer here a curious sentimental correspondence between the famous La Peyrouse and his fiancée Mlle. de Vézian, who afterwards became the Marquise de Sénagas, doubtless whilst the sailor was ploughing the seas. I must ask my cousin to let me see these letters. It would be a precious discovery, the wreck of La Peyrouse's heart, as curious as that of his vessel. But who thinks of that ? Who thinks of seeking a great man in his inner self ?

That is how Montels would occupy its little corner in history. Many celebrated places have less interest ; the whole thing is to make the interest stand out ; it is not lacking in men or nature, it seems to me. How many treasures beneath scrap of moss, and, if I so wish, in this chill and unattractive room ! First of all the sunshine at my feet under the table, where I warm them in that big square of light that comes from the window at my side. . . .

My beautiful description interrupted in the middle of the page, by the announcement of our departure.

(No date).—What am I to say? What reply am I to make? What is this you tell me is being prepared for Maurice? Poor ray of glory that is to fall on his grave ! How I should have loved to see it on his brow whilst he was alive, when we could have looked on it without tears ! It is too late now for the joy to be complete, and yet I feel a certain mournful joy in this voice of fame that will cling to the name I have loved most, in telling myself that this beloved memory will not die. Oh ! the heart longs to immortalise what it loves ! I have heard it said, and I feel that this extends from Heaven to earth ; be it by love or by faith, for this world or for the next, the soul recoils from annihilation. Maurice, my loved one, still lives, he has faded out, disappeared from this world, like a star that dies in one place to shine forth again in another. How that thought consoles me, sustains me in this separation ! How many hopes I place upon it ! I see this ray that is to fall on Maurice descend from the sky, it is the reflection of his halo, that crown that

gleams on the brows of the elect, of the minds that are saved. Those that are lost have nothing left to single them out in the eye of God, whatever mark of distinction men bestow upon them, for all human glory passes away quickly. I would not rejoice if that were the only glory I saw for my brother; but he died in sanctity, and I accept with eagerness the glorification of his intellect that can be united to the canonisation of his soul.

I say nothing further on this wide subject, having written and expressed my feelings and profound gratitude to you, to M. Sainte-Beuve, and to Madame Sand, for the part you have each had in this publication of the *Centaure*, that beautiful work of my brother, and in bringing to light his life and talent.

Oh! how deeply I am touched by your saying that my thoughts, my expressions, my images, were like those of Maurice, that he and I were twin spirits! That is the most beautiful resemblance you can trace, and the sweetest for me.¹ . . .

April 2nd, 1840. — Stream of impressions and thoughts broken off at the place erased, sunk back into the soul, and lost for these pages. Should I regret it? No, doubtless, but these repressed thoughts, these restrained effusions have a cause that I should like to know. Formerly it was not so; my thoughts, my life flowed freely, went on their way brimming over their banks, spreading out in a thousand places, a thousand ways, and now they stop at a grain of sand, I am lost every moment, the smallest trifles have their effect: a symptom of failing strength.

¹ Here some lines are erased.

What would it be without the divine support that raises me up so powerfully at times? I should be for ever in a state of utter despondency. Society conversation, amusement, are of little avail in that weariness of the soul. I have just tried these. There is no radical or deep change. The whole influence of distractions works only on the surface, and succeeds in exciting only an outward smile.

Read *Waverley*. Oh! the harrowing death of a brother, the horrible catastrophe at the end! I am deeply moved at it. Although fictitious, such things have a powerful and painful effect on us; one tale has drawn tears from me, though I have shed few for tales; but in this, this melancholy picture full of affecting touches, Walter Scott is so interesting and wields such power over the heart! Why have I not some books occasionally, these things that speak to the soul, and make such an impression on it! Nothing acts so powerfully on me as reading, nothing makes me feel so acutely now when I am losing my taste for everything.

And as for writing, what is the good of my writing? Silent interrogation at times, more often full of answers. Yet I hardly write at all. I even neglect this diary; several days pass without my touching it, and I no longer put the date. I have no longer pleasure in looking back upon dates or anything else in my life, now so full of painful memories. What used to delight me or would have delighted me is now a source of grief, for all is stamped with mourning. Some day, perhaps, in course of time, this state of mind will change, but at present there is nothing that can distract me. I have tried company, decidedly company

wearies me ; the spirit one meets with there is not to my taste, the laughter of fools does not cheer me. I cannot take part in it, and so I may say in the words of Esther, I think, that amidst the throng and its distractions, I continue to feel alone. Do you know in what company I am happy? At church. There I am at home. All my life I have preferred a chapel to a salon, angels to men, that inner communion with God to outward noise. One is not born and brought up in solitude, one has not lived between Heaven and earth, in the open air, near the cross, to feel as others do, like those who gather their thoughts and their affections from the world. Nothing has come to me from that direction, doubtless nothing will come. It is not worth while for me to have recourse to that.

What memories rise around me ! On this day I lost my mother, on this day I left Maurice and Paris. The mournful date April 2nd ! Sorrows are the only landmarks in life. The birds, to be sure, know no trouble, at least not the thrush that is singing to-day under my window. Joyful little creature ! I have begun to listen to him many times, and to delight in these trills, twitterings and salutations to the spring. These sweet and joyous songs from under a juniper-tree float up with the air to my little room, and produce an indescribable effect. Valentino cannot be compared with them for charm : Valentino where, nevertheless, I heard eighty musicians and some of Beethoven's music. To prefer a poor little thrush to that, what an insult to the fine arts ! Surely I am a savage.

Yes, I asked myself at these concerts and many

other things at Paris, "Where, then, is the rapture that was promised you?" Yet I saw and heard wonders, but nothing to astonish me! So will there be surprise in Heaven alone? Whence comes this disappointment of our sensations? From our feeling of the finite, and of the infinite, no doubt, because the soul when moved deeper than the senses does not receive all it perceives. Besides, since Eve all satisfied curiosity is disappointed.

(No date).—Glanced through Bossuet's *History*, full of the grandeur and loftiness that marked the age of Louis XIV., an age personified under its religious aspect in that man of genius and piety. It is too vast for me to speak of, but the impression left by that book is so beautiful and good that I mention it here; and then how many memories cling to these fragments of eloquence which carry us back to the most glorious era for France, to the most brilliant court of the world, and carry me back to my childhood and to Maurice! At the age of thirteen or fourteen I devoured the Funeral Orations, that Érembert had brought from college; I read them without understanding them, no doubt, without any attraction but these thoughts of Heaven and death, which at an early age had so much influence over me; and then, later on, Maurice often spoke with much admiration of Bossuet's sermons, which we read together, and of which he had noted some passages for me. It was the last religious book that I read to him during his illness. That all affected me in reading this history, in which I saw my own history reflected. Moss on a cedar, a trifle that has given

me as much food for thought as the great century. It is my great period, the beautiful days of youth, now fled, and with them Maurice, the king of my heart. Perhaps there is weakness in this tendency of the mind towards the heart, towards itself and all connected with itself; it is selfishness, vanity. It would cause me sorrow, were it not the characteristic of suffering nature to link the whole world to its woes. Besides, nothing appears on the outside, it all goes on in the soul, and no one perceives what I feel and suffer. I express my thoughts only to God and here. Oh! what efforts I am making to-day to shake off the vain grief, this dry, tearless grief, that beats on the heart like a hammer! It is the most painful of feelings, yet we must bear it like any other, and we do bear it with the same help: with the cross, with Jesus in the Garden of Olives, sad even to death.

The litany of grief that I have made in this burst of anguish will find a place here :

O Christ, who art come to suffer, take pity on my grief.

O Christ, who hast taken our sorrows upon Thee,

O Christ, who wast born in destitution,

O Christ, who hast lived as a stranger on the earth,

O Christ, who hadst not where to lay Thy head,

O Christ, who hast been misunderstood,

O Christ, who hast suffered contradictions,

O Christ, who hast suffered temptations,

O Christ, who hast seen Lazarus die,

O Christ, who in Thine anguish hast sweated blood
in the Garden of Olives,

O Christ, who hast been sorrowful even unto death,

- O Christ, who hast received Judas's kiss
- O Christ, who wast abandoned by Thy disciples,
- O Christ, who wast crowned with thorns,
- O Christ, who wast scourged,
- O Christ, who hast borne Thy cross,
- O Christ, who didst sink down three times on the
road to Calvary,
- O Christ, who hast seen the women of Jerusalem
weeping,
- O Christ, who hast met Thy mother,
- O Christ, who hast seen Thy beloved disciple at the
foot of the cross,
- O Christ, who hast seen the impenitent thief at Thy
side,
- O Christ, who hast suffered so much for sinners,
- O Christ, who hast ended Thy life uttering a deep
groan, take pity on my grief.

Palm Sunday.—To-day when all is green, when all blooms and rejoices in the sunshine of the holy festival, something of this spirit of gladness creeps into my soul. I abandon myself to it, I repose amidst these sweet feelings as in the grass of a meadow. Oh! how beautiful it is here in my solitude, amidst my thoughts of this day, this day of hosanna, of hymns, of passionate faith and love for our Saviour, the King of Glory, triumphant over the world, who comes riding on an ass, bringing in His train not conquered peoples, but the sick He has healed, the dead He has raised! I saw before me in the church, among the choir-boys, a little lad whose voice, figure and brisk bearing reminded me of Maurice when he swung the censer at Andillac. That, mingled with religious emotions, brings me

for the moment to a pleasant frame of mind, which I record here, before the blessed branch decked with so many pious and sweet memories. In my childhood it was a bough decked with fruits and cakes that we carried joyously to church. The one with the finest branch was the lucky one, and had been the wisest: a charming object of rivalry for the children, this bough covered with dainties, a feast hanging under the verdure, given by Jesus to the little children that He loved, for having sung Hosanna to Him in the temple on this day! How many beautiful aspects religion has! How lovable it is in our early years.

Marie is quite despondent and afraid at a painful illness that keeps her in bed, with gloomy presentiments. "Good-bye," she says to me, "not for the last time, I hope, but there can be no farewell more painful or more sad." Must we be two hundred leagues apart! Can I not go to this dear friend whom I see suffering in solitude! But my father and my brother hold me back as strongly as she draws me to her. I am heart-broken. Oh! how friendship brings suffering! With me everything connected with friendship turns to suffering, be it for this life or the other, whether the state of mind or the state of health of those I love is the source of my sorrow. Yet Érembert has consoled me greatly to-day. I have a Christian brother who fulfils all the duties of a brother at this holy season of Easter.

This day last year Maurice filled my thoughts in the same way. That memory mingles in all my life. All last night I dreamed of him, sometimes living, sometimes dead. I saw him, spoke to him, but it was

only a lifeless body that told me his soul was in Heaven. Oh! Maurice, when shall I see thee in reality? What wild longings for that place where brother and sister are reunited, and all those whom death has parted! And what fears and tremblings sometimes before that other world where God shall judge us!

Still there is nothing that weighs on my soul or causes me remorse. I have lived happily far from the world, in ignorance of almost all that leads to evil or develops it in us. At an age when impressions are so strong, all mine have been those of piety. I have lived as if in a monastery; so my life must be incomplete as regards the social side. What I know in this way comes to me almost by instinct, by inspiration, like poetry, and has enabled me to behave in a becoming fashion everywhere. A certain tact warns me, gives me a notion of things, and enables me to seem at home in places where most often I feel a stranger, as in company. But I speak little. I have the gift of comprehension rather than of expression. This latter requires practice; when I am in conversation I feel my deficiency; the fitting words, the right thoughts do not come; almost never do I say at first what I should say afterwards. Compliments do not appeal to me; jokes a little more, no doubt, because they stimulate the intelligence. Not long ago I made a foolish reply to some marks of politeness that took me unawares. They came, moreover, from someone who frightens me, a witty man who makes me feel embarrassed, and checks the flow of thought. Strange to say, I approach men of the highest intelligence without embarrassment; I feel no more shy before M. Xavier de Maistre than before

his armchair, and yet I remain abashed with the most ordinary people, I lose my self-possession when I pass among peasants who look at me, when I speak to my confessor. Maurice was the only person in the world with whom I was not shy.

Easter Eve.—Oh ! what a difference last year at Paris ! Profound memories come back to me. That evening there had been a consultation of doctors, and I was deeply affected. We were at Valentino ; there the black-sealed packet was handed to us ; there was poor Marie, a strange meeting on the night of a farewell ! That concert ended my stay at Paris ; it was the death-knell of my society life, which I listened to with a certain sweet and sad emotion, somewhat like that emotion I feel at the memory of these things and those people, who come back to me like shadows in my little room, at the same hour and less harmoniously than at Valentino. The concert is the rain that beats on my window, and all the regrets that beat on my heart. I have seen, I have felt what I always dreaded, death, separation for ever ! How much need I have to think of to-morrow's festival ! How glorious is that resurrection ! Oh ! since we must die, how sweet it is to believe that we shall behold this coming to life ! May the pious thoughts to which I shall give myself up deliver me from that throng of others that weigh upon the soul !

Easter Evening.—O Easter, the day of reincarnation, of celestial rejoicing, when all things bloom forth once more ! I know not how to express, how to speak of this festival of the Passover, so beautiful,

so magnificent in ancient and in modern times, which has called forth the *In exitu* and the *O Filii*, and made me sing so many hymns inwardly when I saw Érembert this morning at the communion table. One must be a Christian and a sister to feel this, and to experience the bliss that comes to us when we have hopes of Heaven for a soul we love, hopes of seeing it united to God, to the sovereign good.

April 20th, 1840.—It was surely a nightingale that I heard this morning. It was towards dawn and just as I had wakened, so that I thought afterwards I had been dreaming ; but I have just heard it again, my musician has arrived. I note this every year, the coming of the nightingale and the first flower. These are epochs in the country and in my life. Thus is marked the opening of spring, so wonderfully beautiful, and the seasons late or early. My charming calendars are never wrong, they announce accurately the fine days, the sunshine and the verdure. When I hear a nightingale or see a swallow, I say to myself with unspeakable joy, "The winter is ended." I gather fresh life away from the cold, the mists, the leaden sky, all this dead nature. I turn fresh and green again like a blade of grass, even morally. Thought and all its flowers show themselves again. No epic poem was ever made in winter.

(No date).—Adieu, grand-aunt, whose dead lips I have just kissed ; adieu, last survivor of a generation of ancestors, the Verdun family, all in their graves now, and so scattered : at Ile de France, Bourbon, here, and elsewhere. My poor aunt had mourned

over all her kindred, father, mother, nephews, whom first the Revolution and then death have taken from her, and there she is now following that numerous train. We shall follow just the same; alas! we form but a funeral procession in this world, and how rapidly we march! We are afraid to look, but move on with averted heads, without thinking of it. It is very sad, but has its use. The saints have understood it, these men who meditate upon a skull, to preserve themselves from the corruption of life.

But how is it that such thoughts hardly affect me at all, that deaths and coffins, that once I could not bear to hear talked of, are now my ordinary impressions? The shuddering I used to feel at merely seeing the house or the room of a departed! And now I go in, I touch, I kiss, but, Oh, Heavens! what a kiss! It is the second that I have imprinted on cheeks that freeze the lips, that send a shudder through the whole body, and sensations of the other world into the soul. I have learned that from Maurice, I have learned death and all that comes after. Since then nothing surprises or terrifies me. They do not wish me to go to that funeral, but I could go without any risk, nothing there would do me any harm. I am used to such things. Was there not a king who grew used to poison? Well, here I shall pray to God for my aunt, whilst she is being laid in the earth. God hears us everywhere, and if I wish, I can easily picture to myself a cemetery.

(No date).—Monsieur de M*** sends me word that his wife is too weak to write to me. Bad though

that news is, I am glad at it, so afraid was I to hear worse. That Easter letter alarmed me so much. At last I am reassured, since this is an improvement. Oh ! how sorry I should be to lose this dear friend ! Oh ! the anguish of separations ! This would be the crowning sorrow. A nun from Nevers who was going back again offered me a good opportunity for a journey, if I could have left here. But Érembert, my father, so many strong reasons detain me. My heart is rent asunder, torn by Le Cayla and Les Coques, bound with equal bonds to both places. We need a centre for our affections, some place that contains all we love, a little paradise on earth, the image of that in the sky which is but community of love. How often I have thought of that, and how much I should like Le Cayla if I could gather there all my chosen ones, the few I possess scattered through the world, and whom I regard as distinct from it ! If I were asked, "Who are they ?" I should say, "My chosen ones are like no others ; seek for them among what is least seen, among the rare natures."

(No date).—If I have written nothing here for a week, it is because I have done nothing but write to Marie, a journal of my inmost thoughts, flying leaves of friendship that will go and heap her bed one fine moment, much to her surprise ; the poor invalid will take pleasure in that. They are trifles, but the trifles of the heart have their charm. To these I add some books she had lent me and a map of my district, these places in which her soul dwells so much. I wish to show them to her, and

I enjoy in anticipation the pleasure they will give her. As for the books, I am sorry to send them back ; I part regretfully with what I brought away on leaving, pages imprinted with farewells, memories of my journey, which I read in the diligence from Bourges to Tours, when I found myself sufficiently alone to be able to read. If ever I see them again I shall read them amidst the memories of that past, that state of mind when I was plunged in regrets, sadness, fears, in suspense between life and death, meditating on that poor invalid I was going to see, with thoughts that were most harrowing, sometimes the most conflicting ; for we cannot help hoping, though we know not very well on what we build our hopes. Marie, Marie, with what gloomy presentiments we parted ! I cannot forget that last look she cast on me from the window, where she stood wrapped in a dark mantle. She seemed like mourning personified.

May 1st, 1840. — Whatever be my indifference to-day for all that takes place on earth, I wish, nevertheless, to mark this first day of May, as has been my custom. This day that ushers in the most beautiful month of the year is no longer what it was to me. All is changed.

Poetry interrupted by lightening. What noise, what peals, what an accompaniment of rain, wind, flashes, rumbling, roaring, the terrible voice of the storm ! And yet the nightingale was singing, sheltered under some leaf ; one would have said that he laughed at the storm or struggled with the lightening ;

thunderclap and warble made a charming accompaniment to which I listened, leaning on the window. I enjoyed the song that sounded so sweet amidst this frightful noise.

May 6th, 1840.—This is to mark the date of a letter from Nivernais, sweet news that forms quite an event in the life of my heart. In time to come, in a few months even, I shall be very glad to recall a day marked with delightful emotions on a background of sadness, such as Marie causes. This time it is her mother, my mother by adoption, who writes to me and touches me deeply in speaking of her daughter, and of her hope, sprung I know not whence, of seeing me along with my sister at Nevers; but that sister has gone. . . . Oh! my father! he prevails again over Marie. I feel it at this moment when there is a question of leaving him. How all that grieves me! And yet it is happiness to be loved. But what is that happiness that moves even to tears?

I have not seen the East, but I doubt if its beautiful nights are more beautiful than those we have here just now. I was filled with wonder and admiration on opening my window as usual to look at the state of the sky before going to bed: how clear it is, how transparent, studded with stars, and suffused with the dim light of the crescent moon, and . . .

(No date).—Several days since that last night, and between these two lines of writing. How little space time fills! Once past it is nothing. Into that small space we could put a century. I see nothing there, whatever may have come into the

history of my life, because all remains shut up in my heart, because I no longer feel an interest in relating anything, neither about myself nor anything else. All dies and I am dying to all things, dying with a slow moral agony, a state of unspeakable suffering.—Go, poor diary, vanish into oblivion with these objects that perish! I shall write no more here till I come to life again, until God raises me from this tomb in which my soul lies buried. Maurice, my friend! it was not thus when I had thee. The thought of him raised me from my dejection more than aught else; to have him in this world was enough. With Maurice I should not have known weariness even between two mountains.

News of death, the death of a young girl, Camille de Boisset, the sister of one of my friends, the divine Antoinette.

I have found no book for a long time so agreeable and so much to my taste as this I have just been reading, a book which is almost unknown to the world, a *Catechism*, of which the introduction by itself wins the heart and the understanding. The preface is a most elegant piece of its kind, an exquisite foretaste of an exquisite work of piety, intelligence and love. I have felt in anticipation sweet emotions, and discerned bright beams of light for me in this religious reading to which I give myself up. I am going to see and to know my religion as I have never yet seen it as a whole. How infinite it is in marvels, how admirable! At each new examination, at each look, we discover fresh reasons for our love and admiration. The need of my heart leads me in this direction, it is satisfied

only by divine things. This was always the case, but it is still more so now that those attractions are lost which were left in my life and nourished my soul. Happy are we when the spirit of God enters into this void, and there creates a fresh universe ! It seems as though that were going on within me, as though something new and superhuman were at work, the transformation into another life, another world where God is, and where I have my mother and Maurice. Oh ! how death divides us from this world, and makes it distasteful ! I have noticed something similar in the case of St Theresa. After the death of her brother she wrote : “ I am four years older than he, and yet I cannot attain to death ! ”

“ When the stem has reached the proper height and strength, we see a little bud forming on the upper part. This bud contains all that is most precious in the plant. So we shall see with what tender and unremitting care Providence surrounds it. She wraps it first in three or four coverings, very closely joined together, so as to protect it against cold, heat, insects, winds and rain. The first of these coverings is hardest and offers most resistance ; the second surpasses muslin or silk in fineness and beauty ; the third, which touches the seed, has nothing that can be compared with it for delicacy and softness. It is made thus so as not to wound the little creature it contains. As this precious germ grows the coverings enlarge : at last they open, but not altogether, nor all at once, lest they should expose the little nursling to the risk of perishing. When it is strong enough, all these little coverings of muslin, all this soft down is stripped off as we strip the swaddling-clothes from an infant.

How pretty that is ! This admiration escapes me, but I wish to present this charming picture as a whole.

“ This precious germ is destined to give birth to new plants ; but this new birth will be accompanied with an indescribable joy and magnificence. When the child of a king comes into the world, he is received in a gilded cradle and placed in richly decorated apartments. That is what God does for the child or the fruit of the smallest plant. Leaves of inimitable softness and fineness, painted with the most beautiful, the most varied and agreeable colours, serve it for cradle and swaddling-clothes. Around it the sweetest of perfumes is exhaled ; and it is in the midst of this dwelling, more rich than the Louvres of kings, that it is born and grows up. Look closely at all that, and, if you can, forbid your lips to say with our Saviour : ‘ I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.’ ”

Never was a flower so beautifully depicted, never was a more graceful description given. We would imagine ourselves reading a new Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, and it is simply a passage of the catechism, that catechism of perseverance, by the Abbé Gaume, of which I spoke. Good and beautiful work of the age, which under the simplest title contains the complete history of religion related for children in the most attractive manner. A few glances sufficed to charm me. I am going to refresh my soul with this book.

May 23rd, 1840.—At last, I know that this precious work the *Centaur* has appeared. Some young people from Gaillac told me. I have been thinking of that

ever since, and of the past, alas ! whither the smallest thing leads me back. Will you send it to me ? Perhaps. I may be unjust, but your silence is so long and the human heart so changeable ! And what would be remarkable if a man of the world should chance to forget a poor anchorite's friendship, which cannot promise him much in the way of pleasure ? My sole claim is that I am Maurice's sister, and that may easily be effaced : *time effaces all things*.

This morning, at sunrise, I paid a visit to the fields, for the Rogations. How pretty it is to wander through the country at this hour ! to be present at the awakening of the flowers, of the birds, of a whole spring morning, and then how easy prayers are ! How softly they are wafted away in the scented air, in sight of such beautiful and magnificent works of God ! To see the spring again is excess of happiness. God has willed it doubtless to console us for that earthly paradise. Nothing gives me such a good idea of Eden as this sight of nature reviving, billowy, resplendent in the lovely freshness of May.

I stopped at the village. The little gold cross that Maurice carried about with him I placed on the neck of a young man who is sick. He kissed it with tears, and that will do him good. The sight of a cross is good when one is in pain. I know nothing more calming, and I give it with faith and love.

(No date).—No, I shall not write of my emotions, besides, they are so varied. Oh ! how that shows the numberless faculties of the soul, so many feelings and thoughts ! The rain-bow has not so many colours, and all that in such a short time ! How many sensations pass through my mind in a few minutes sometimes !

May 28th, 1840. — Another death, still another vanished from that group of friends that were attached to Maurice : poor young men, all full of joy and promise, all gathered together lately at Paris, now scattered in their graves here and there ! Oh ! how heart-breaking it is ! How many lamentations rise to my lips when I think of this swift and melancholy destruction of men ! Men of the world, alas ! and so more to be pitied than others, men whom I have seen, known, appreciated, and in whom I have found something to love. I had found M. Bodimont strongly devoted to Maurice ; his pretty little wife (dead too) had also interested me, and all that, joined to my most precious memories, struck me with sorrow when I found M. Bodimont's name in the obituary of the *Gazette*. All that is wanting now is to see yours there ; I no longer find it anywhere.

O God, take pity on these poor friends' souls !

(No date).—How beautiful that *Polyeucte* is, and that Corneille ! What verses :

Je vous aime

Beaucoup moins que mon Dieu, mais bien plus que
moi-même.

(You I love

Less than my God, but much more than myself.)

After that and so many other beautiful and sublime thoughts that these great authors have at all times drawn from religion, to think that anyone should come and tell us that this religion is nothing but a beautiful dream, a pleasing fancy ! “What ! our sole good is an illusion ! What ! this Christianity that

came down from Heaven upon the earth along with the Son of God, promised by the prophets, announced by the apostles, verified by so many miracles, confirmed by so many martyrs, this religion alone worthy of God, this visibly divine doctrine that has formed so many worthy men on earth is but a dream?" These words by someone recur to me.

May 30th, 1840. — "Dear Eugénie, your loving heart will be sadly affected in reading the account of your friend's sufferings." Such is the beginning of a letter overflowing with troubles, indeed, written and felt. Poor Marie! who has no longer the strength to speak to me of her sufferings. It is no longer in her own writing, it is her mother who writes me the distressing report. Grief and anguish, one after another, life is but a path of sorrow, naught but tears, and yet amidst these tears I have not all I want, for I long so much to have that *Centaur*. This morning I counted my lost friendships, perished through death or indifference, and they are many, though I have seen little of the world.

Among all the beautiful effects of the wind in the country there is none so beautiful as the sight of a field of corn, tossing, rippling, waving under these gusts that pass over it, bending and lifting the ears so quickly. The movement seems to form great green balls, rolling in thousands one over the other with infinite grace. I spent half an hour contemplating that and picturing to myself the sea with its green and billowy surface. Oh! how I should like really to see the sea, that great mirror of God, in which are reflected so many marvels!

June 1st, 1840. — A rare visit, an interesting conversation. From time to time some kind passer-by stops at Le Cayla, that great desert, empty, or peopled almost as the earth was before man appeared in it. Whole days go past without my seeing anything but sheep, or hearing anything but birds. Solitude not without a charm for the soul that is detached from the world, and freed from its illusions.

June 5th, 1840.—Oh! this date is recorded, this day, the arrival of this Review, this moment when at last I am going to read the *Centaur*! I have it here, I hold it, look at it, hesitate to open it, this mournful collection, for which I would have given my eyes an instant ago! Oh! Heavens, what opposite feelings there are in the heart!

June 9th, 1840.—For four days I have remained under the impression made on me by the *Centaur*, by these letters, these revelations, so lofty and so frank, these utterances of the heart, so profound and so sad, these presentiments of a near end, so unhappily realised, all these precious and painful memories of Maurice that the *Revue de Deux Mondes* has brought me. Nothing, even of what I have read of Maurice, ever moved me so much as reading this. Can it be that the appearance of these writings of his, hitherto unknown to me, renews and deepens the sense of his loss, or that when they are presented with a charm that heightens the value, I am more affected than by what I had already seen without that? Whatever be the case, I taste a joy dipped in tears, a happiness with two tastes. In this beautiful

Centaur and these fragments of his inner self I feel that I possess Maurice more fully, a possession more appreciated and therefore more sad than ever. How impressive he is in his emotional passages, in that soft, delicate and polished style of dealing with grief, that I have found in none but him! Oh! Madame Sand is right in saying that they are words to be set like great diamonds on the crest of a diadem. Or rather, Maurice was all diamond.

Blessed be those who esteem his worth, blessed be the voice that praises him, that extols him with so much respect and intelligent enthusiasm! But this voice is wrong in one point, it is wrong when it says that soul was lacking in faith. No, he was not lacking in faith, I proclaim and attest it by what I have seen and heard, by the prayers, the religious books, the sacraments, by all the Christian acts, by the death that reveals the life, the death upon a crucifix. I should like to write to George Sand, and send her something I have in my mind about Maurice, a crown, as it were, to cover that stain she has put on his brow. I cannot bear that anyone should take away or add the least feature to that countenance, so beautiful in its truth; and that irreligious and pagan light disfigures it.

June 15th, 1840.—What is this that comes to me from Paris for Maurice, for him who never dreamt of glory, nor wished for it? But I accept it in his memory, and for his memory. This is what the *Compte de Beaufort* has just offered me: the publication of a notice in the *Revue de Paris*, which will be a companion to that in the *Revue de Deux Mondes*,

in all the beauty and purity of Christian resemblance. Madame Sand makes a sceptic of Maurice, a great poet after the manner of Byron, and it grieves me to see the name of my brother presented in this false light, a name that remained pure from these deplorable errors. I wanted to write to do homage to the truth, and here is a voice raised. Thank God! I have only to approve of what has been asked of us. We shall give it with joy.

Friday, June 19th, 1840.—Exactly eleven months (and a Friday!) since his death. What a day, and how I have spent it! After prayers, that uplifting of the soul towards God and him, I have done nothing but turn over his papers, his letters, his poems, dear and saintly relics, that at first I did not dare to touch, and in which I afterwards found a mysterious attraction that held me. At first tears, and then an intoxication, as it were, from that past, opened up again, tasted, drunk in by the heart in long draughts. Oh! what a sad charm in that! And in opening this sad cardboard box, what did I find there on a heap of things? These lines, these lines, striking in their application, left there two years ago.

“I ask not where thou art resting, nor shall I seek thy tomb. We have known the brightest days of life, the saddest can be but mine.

If I could weep as once I wept, I should have reason to shed tears, in thinking that I could not watch beside thy bed. . . .

How much I prefer to all things that I love, the memory that I cherish of thee.¹ . . .”

¹ A paraphrase of Byron's well-known lines.

Alas! whence did I gather those thoughts that held so cruel a truth, seven or eight years ago? Would not one say that our soul hears misfortune from afar, so much do these and other thoughts that I find in the past apply to my loss! O God!

It is for him I make this mournful inventory, in order to render to his memory that pious care over all he has left me. Until now I had set aside only his last letters, and now I wish to lay them all away, like something holy.

July 1st, 1840.—I have heard the first grasshopper. How delightful it would have been to hear it this day last year, with Maurice at my window! But we were on the road from Bordeaux, amidst heat, dust and anxiety.

An unexpected and charming note from M. Sainte-Beuve! that exquisite author whose very handwriting I receive. Once it would have been a great pleasure, but at present all turns to bitterness and tears. So it is with this note and so many other things that are due to Maurice's death. All my ties, almost my whole life is bound up in a coffin.

July 8th, 1840.—A year ago we were just arriving at Le Cayla at seven o'clock in the evening.

(No date).—I have been sadly neglecting my Journal for some time; I had almost left it off, and to-day I am taking it up again, not that I have anything interesting to put in it, but simply that I come back to something dear to me; for I love it, this poor collection, in spite of my neglect. It is linked to a chain of joys, to a past that has too firm a hold

of my heart for me to be indifferent to what comes after. So these pages will be continued. I leave them, and always take them up again, these dear pages, like the throbbings in the breast, suspended sometimes by feelings of oppression.

So my days are about to resume their natural uneventful course. For the moment I note a visit, one of those I would like sometimes as an agreeable diversion. Though he is a young man, very young, one can talk with him, for he has read, seen the world, and has a gentle disposition and a coolness of judgment I like for the varied discussion of varied things. We have not the same way of looking at things, and my age permitting me to express and defend my point of view, I enjoy contradicting him, partly for pleasure, partly from conviction ; for what I say I think.

If there is anything sweet, soft, inexpressible in its calm and beauty, it is certainly our lovely nights, this that I have just been watching from my window, where under the bright moonlight, in the transparence of the fragrant air, everything is outlined as if under a crystal globe.

(No date).—In Brittany, not far from La Chênaie, there is a district called Val de l'Arguenon, a deep solitude on the shore of the ocean, where Maurice lived. He went there at the time of M. de Lamennais' fall, and was entertained at the house of a friend, the kind and affectionate Hippolyte de La Morvonnais. I shall always cherish the most grateful remembrance of this welcome and this devoted attachment, of the touching sympathy that this friend of Maurice's and

his charming wife vowed and expressed to me. For some time we kept up a regular correspondence with the family, and this was continued with M. Hippolyte after he lost his wife. To-day, after a long silence of two years, there has come to me a letter just like those of former days, and, besides that, full, alas ! of Maurice's death. How shall I tell you how this has touched me, this testimony of the heart, this resurrection, as it were, of a friend on the grave of his friend ! So I shall answer him, I shall tell him why I have not written, why I allowed that death to be made known to him by a newspaper ; for it was thus he learned of our loss. I would not forgive myself for this, if I had not good reasons for excuse, a fatality by which my last letters or his have been lost. It was the *Revue des Deux Mondes* that carried the news of this death, this mourning, to L' Arguenon, poor sweet country, filled with associations of Maurice.

We are to see that in a work by M. Hippolyte, which he says he is sending me along with another ; but I have only received his letter, which is enough for Maurice's poor sister. He also had called me his sister ; a far-off, unknown relationship, but he was to come and bring me Marie, his little daughter, whom Maurice had kissed and caressed in her cradle and on her mother's knee, a charming child, he said. I was much interested in this child when I saw her by her mother's side in her lifetime and afterwards when she was dead, and I was delighted to hold her on my knee. Such are the dreams and feelings that this letter re-awakens. I had written to this friend at Maurice's request, for by myself I should never have had the idea of keeping up with him a corre-

spondence that had been broken off by the death of his poor young wife. Shall we resume it now when I am less inclined than ever for correspondence? But he was one of Maurice's friends who helped him in time of misfortune, and appreciated his worth, who showed him faithful and devoted kindness in evil days of the soul. That is enough, without taking into account what he still does, the article about Maurice in *L' Université Catholique*. That is sufficient reason why I should reply cordially to this last letter. He has a place in my heart; for God teaches me to recognise the good qualities of men.

July 18th, 1840.—His last day on earth.

July 19th, 1840.—Eleven o'clock in the morning.—Mournful strokes of a bell that I have just heard, at the very moment, the very hour when his soul quitted this world; with the same dismal sound, just as if this bell tolled for him now. The same day, the same instant has come round again, and all this morning I have heard this passing bell in my soul, but it was for another death. Oh! Heavens, what an anniversary! What a vivid and real memory of that death, that room, the mournful candles that burned around the bed, the bed itself surrounded with tears and prayers, that pale face, that *in manus tuas, Domine*, repeated aloud again and again! Maurice! God must have heard and received in Heaven thy soul that cried for Heaven.—Oh! farewell once more, and as bitterly as then; time and death have removed thee, but have made no change

in my heart. Thou art ever there, my dearly loved brother ! once for my joy, now for my tears, which I transform into prayers as much as I can. That is *the best proof of love that a Christian can give*. So this day will be but a pious meditation on death ; on that life beyond the life where we are to-day, hidden, mysterious, impenetrable, but real, revealed, founded on faith, *on faith, the ground of our hopes and the conviction of what we do not see*. Happy those who believe ! How I wish that all could believe, and that mysteries worthy of adoration should be adored by all men ! Revealed truths are like an abyss, dark and bottomless, and this constitutes the merit of faith. But one is led there by sure and light paths, which are the word of God and the testimony borne to this word. Hence it is that submission to the truths of faith is a firm and reasonable obedience. When we consider these holy matters, we see them thus.

XI

! July 26th, 1840.—The writing of the dead is a very sad and precious relic, the remnant, or rather the image of their soul, traced on paper. Thus for several days I have seen Maurice again in his letters, which I have been arranging, a melancholy packet in which so much is contained. Oh! what a beautiful intelligence, what promise of treasures! The longer I live the more I see what we have lost in Maurice. In how many ways he was attractive! Noble young man, so accomplished, of a nature so lofty, rare and refined, of ideals so pure, that he invested all he touched with an atmosphere of poetry! Would he not have charmed people with all the charms of the heart?

It is abandoning oneself to an intoxication of sadness to recall this past, to turn over these letters, to open these note-books so full of associations. Oh! the power of memories! These dead things, I believe, make more impression on me than when they were alive; and the recollection of these feelings is stronger than the feelings themselves. I have felt that many times.

July 28th, 1840.—Two little birds, welcome

companions to me in my little room, who will sing while I write, will provide the music and accompaniment for me, like the pianos that played beside Madame de Staël when she was writing. Sound is inspiring; I understand this by the sounds of the country, so light, so airy, so vague, so irregular, with such power over the soul. How must it be with a union of knowledge and genius, on one who understands all that, who is endowed with a musical temperament, and has developed it by study and knowledge of the art? There is nothing in the world more impressive, or with more power over the soul. I understand it, but I do not feel it. In my profound ignorance I would listen with as much pleasure to a cricket as to a violin. Instrumental music has little or no effect on me. Of course I must understand them as I understand a simple air; but the grand concerts, the operas, the pieces that are so much extolled, all that is to me an unknown tongue! When I say operas, I have never heard any, I have only heard overtures on the piano. Among the forbidden fruits of that Parisian paradise there are two things that I longed to taste, the Opera and Mlle. Rachel, above all Mlle. Rachel, who recites Racine so well, they say. That must be so beautiful!

Still another person whom I should have been delighted to see, and whom surely I would not have denied myself, is Madame ***, that graceful and charming woman, of whom I have heard so much. This alone would be enough to attract me, "She is universally benevolent." A quality so sweet and so rare, especially in a woman of fashion! Benevolence is the mantle of charity that we cast on those poor and naked ones that we see, as does a kind soul,

one which is checked by its own kindness in that tendency to scoff, to which we are commonly prone. Madame *** shows in this respect a remarkable and charming quality, for nothing is so pleasing as a benevolent disposition, nothing gives me so much the idea of God on earth as intelligence and kindness. I love above all to meet with these two things together, and to enjoy the delightful combination. That is what attracted me to a person whom probably I shall never see. Some mysterious destiny and sequence of events has always made me interested in strangers, without my turning to them of my own accord, but by relations independent of my will. Our life goes on in a way without our control; someone above us directs it, shapes its course, and this thought is sweet to me. It consoles me to see myself in the care of a loving providence. However wretched our days may be, I say and believe they have a good side that I know not; that which is turned to the other life, the other life that solves the problem of this life, so mysteriously sad. Oh! there is something better on high.

July 30th, 1840.—A suicide at Andillac, that frightful suicide has come even here! Poor wretched peasants who are carried away by the spirit of the age, who forget God and destroy themselves!

The second death since the 19th July; but we shall have the grief of seeing these two graves near each other, a dead sinner at the side of our blessed Maurice. That would have caused me sorrow, though it only affects the memory. It is beyond our understanding what the soul must suffer among sinners in Hell,

which is but the meeting-place of all the infamy and wickedness that earth produces. One of the great tortures is to find ourselves in evil company for ever. God save us from that !

Oh ! who can conceive the agony of fear about the salvation of a soul ! What made our Saviour suffer most, in the agony of His passion, was not so much the tortures He had to endure, as the thought that for a great number of sinners these sufferings would be in vain, for these men who have no wish for redemption, or do not trouble themselves about it. Merely to foresee this scorn and recklessness was enough to plunge the Man-God in sadness even to death. A feeling in which Christian souls share more or less according to the degree of their faith and love.

August 4th, 1840. — Anniversary of his birth, so close to that of his death, two dates that touch. How soon his life was over, poor Maurice ! I know not what I would say and I shall say nothing ; there are moments when the thoughts will not come. I am going to read *The Last Day of a Condemned Man*, a nightmare, they tell me. What does it matter ! I have such a feeling of *ennui* to-day, that nothing is too heavy, too dreadful to crush that with. Come !

I could not endure that book, not on account of any emotion, for I felt none, but because of the horrors that I perceived from the first few pages. I closed the book. That was not what was needed for my frame of mind ; I was wrong in seeking something heavy when the real need was for something to lighten my spirits. Praying relieves me, or a

conversation, the open air, walks in the woods and fields. This evening it soothed me to rest on the straw, in the fresh breeze, and watch the labourers threshing the corn, gay fellows who sing all the time. It was pretty to see the measured beat of the flails, the dancing grain, the women and children separating the straw into heaps, the whirling fan that winnows the grain, till it sorts itself out and falls pure as God's corn. These peaceful, smiling scenes please me and do my spirit more good than all M. Hugo's books, for though M. Hugo is a powerful writer, he does not always please me. I have not yet read his *Notre-Dame*, in spite of my desire to read it. It is one of these wishes that we save up.

August 5th, 1840.—Why did he not come sooner, this Breton poet, this singer of *The Thebaid of the Sea-Shore*, the lonely friend of Maurice! Why did he not come in Maurice's lifetime, when I had joy in what I felt! Still his poems please me because they come from the Val de l'Arguenon, because they are religious, and because I find God and Maurice in them. Only two years ago all that would have been a source of delight to me. *How times are changed!* or rather how our soul changes with circumstances! So our life undergoes a transformation from day to day, is divided up by various events and various feelings, until one period no longer resembles the other, until we hardly recognise ourselves from one day to the other, and cannot any longer follow the windings of our variable and transitory nature. But the transition will come to

an end and lead us where we shall change no more. Oh ! the abiding life in Heaven !

My Breton poet, who has suggested these thoughts to me, is still the same misty dreamer as in the past, singing vaguely of vague matters. I have a cousin to whom these poems will be a feast ; that is what charms her, the languorous melancholy, knowing not where to lay one's head. What I like best about M. Hippolyte is that he is religious, and that I shall open his poems like a book of prayer. Here we are then taking up again a correspondence that had lain forgotten. I have not yet fastened his letters with ribbon ; for I tie up with silk all my precious correspondence, each with its own colour. This in black, like the death that has brought it about, alas ! We are friends in mourning.

August 7th, 1840.—An expression of thanksgiving for a favour eagerly and repeatedly begged for, and to-day obtained from God. If I dedicated a Journal to Heaven, it would on certain occasions be well filled ; but these things remain locked up in the soul, and I record merely the course of my life with its events, of whatever kind they may be.

August 8th, 1840.—If we are to believe the ingenious fables of the East, tears become pearls when they fall into the sea. Oh ! if all went there, the sea would roll nothing but pearls. An ocean of sorrow as full as the other, but not more full than the soul at times.

August 9th, 1840.—“ Maurice loved to come in

the twilight to a lonely promontory, when the moon was hidden, and to listen to the tide ebbing far from the beach, or beating against the opposite shores of that wild Arguenon, on the banks of which wandered the still clouded genius of Chateaubriand in his youth." These are the lines, or rather the tears, that come from Brittany to fall on this grave, and wear out my heart with torrents of sadness from the memories of the past, regrets for the present, and that harrowing thought, repeated by all: that in other times Maurice would not have died! . . .

August 12th, 1840.—*He would not have died!* Abyss of reflections and tears into which I am plunged every day! Grief without end to feel that we might have kept what we have lost! And what a loss! God alone knows what Maurice was to me, my brother, my friend, one whom I needed for my life, one on whom I lavished my thoughts, my soul, my heart. I will not dwell on what he was, on what he would have been for that society that has let him perish, if what they say is true. I know not, I am ignorant of the world; I looked on it as a great homicide in the religious sense; it is therefore deadly in a moral sense, from whatever point of view we consider it: deadly inasmuch as it nourishes with poisons the noblest intelligences, or leaves them to die of hunger.

In what age should Maurice have been born? A question I asked myself with regard to his happiness when I examined the different periods. We do not see in what century we could, for their happiness, hang up the cradle of certain geniuses. Intelligence,

like love, is always accompanied by sorrow. For it is not a thing of this world, and all that is out of its sphere must suffer. Religious souls, those that return to God, are the only ones that find any consolation in life. Man meets with nothing but sin and disappointment in his fellowmen ; I, a dweller in the woods, know little about them, but so many people say so that I believe them. Nor have I myself found perfect happiness in anyone. The fullest, the sweetest, the best was in Maurice, yet my joy in him was not without tears. Happiness is a thing surrounded with thorns, from whatever side we touch it.

August 15th, 1840.—It is Sunday, I am alone in my wilderness with one servant, the thunder rolls, and I write, sublime accompaniment for my solitary thoughts. What noble and burning inspiration ! How we should soar, fly, burst into fire at these electric flashes !

August 19th, 1840.—How often I give up writing anything here, how often I come back to it ! Attraction and abandonment, oh ! my life !

(No date).—A week of visits, company, noise, some agreeable conversations, an episode in my solitude. It is the season when people come to see us, this time in crowds, people who have taken a fancy to go to the country, and the country is invaded. Le Cayla is thronged, noisy, gay with youth, the table surrounded with unexpected guests. This happening unexpectedly dispenses with all ceremony ; but we never keep up any, and those

who come to see us must look forward to nothing but a kind welcome, the best we can offer in the simplest form. So here are our rooms all in white-wash, without mirrors or any trace of luxury; the dining-room with its sideboard and some chairs, and two windows looking on the wood to the north; the other room at the side with a great broad sofa, a round table in the middle, a few straw chairs, an old armchair covered with tapestry, where Maurice used to sit, a sacred piece of furniture! two glass doors opening on the terrace, that terrace overlooking a green valley where a brook flows, and in the room a beautiful Madonna with her infant Jesus, a gift of the Queen, such is our home! Bright enough, where those who come enjoy themselves, a home that I like too, but draped in black, inside and out: everywhere I see a lost one, or I am looking for him. Le Cayla without Maurice!

(No date).—My sister Marie has left me for a few days, Marie, our Martha, as I call her, for she is always very busy with household duties, leaving me the restful part, like a kind sister. I know no woman with so devoted a soul or more forgetful of herself. When she is not with me my outer life changes, becomes active, and I am astonished at this activity and this liking for household affairs, so different from my other tastes. Naturally I do not take much pleasure in housekeeping and the government of women. I leave that willingly to others; but if the duties fall to me, I fulfil them zealously, without any feeling of repugnance, without forcing myself, as happens so often when opposite inclina-

tions struggle in our hearts, the wish to do, and the wish not to do.

Could I write nothing better than those trifles, this wretched self? What a trivial pastime! How little inducement there is to continue it! But Maurice liked it and wished it. What I did for him I shall continue in his memory, in the thought that it interests him.

The relation of this world to the next by prayer and writing, two ways of elevating the soul.

(No date).—A dream last night of a funeral. I was following an open coffin. It is impossible to describe this *open* coffin, and the painful and frightful impression made on the spirit by what is within. We do well in covering the dead. However dear may be the face, there is frightful pain in looking on it. And that is what we are without our soul, for therein is the horror, in the stillness of the corpses. What a name! What a transformation! A young man so handsome in the morning, and *that* at night; how it destroys our illusions and turns our thoughts from worldly things! I understand that Spanish grandee, who having once raised up the shroud of a beautiful queen, took refuge in a monastery and became a great saint. Would to God that the sight of death would have this effect on every such man of the world. I should like to have all my friends at La Trappe, in view of their eternal welfare. Not that salvation is impossible for us in this world, or that there are no duties to fulfil in society as holy and as beautiful as in solitude, but,¹ . . .

¹ Left unfinished.

August 25th, 1840.—What shall I do with myself and my solitude to-day? Like Robinson Crusoe in his island I am alone with a dog and a shepherd, a sort of Friday almost as wild as the other. Whom am I to speak with, and think with? With whom am I to live this day's life? The dog understands caresses, but the man does not understand anything, and if I were to ask him for a glass of water in French he would not know what I meant. This servant of sheep, I send him to his beasts. Now with doors shut, bolts drawn for fear of vagabonds, here I am in the white salon with the white Madonna, my celestial companion, sweet and beautiful to see. I look at her as though she were real, and am ready, I believe, to throw myself at her feet if any danger should arise. Even the human form by itself seems to me a protection, all the more sure because it is the image of one who calls herself the help of Christians, *auxilium christianorum*, the Holy Virgin, to whom I have felt on more than one occasion that I owed special favours, once when in danger of death; the other favours, though not conferred on myself, affect me almost as much.

A knock at the door; who can it be? Some beggars. Having given them alms, I return to my sofa. Sweet repose, if it were not a little sad, indeed very sad between loneliness and memories! All the mementoes surround me, I see them with my eyes, I feel them with my heart. How many shadows in this old chateau, coming forth from all the chambers! From all sides the dead come to me: if I could only embrace one! Oh! souls do not suffer themselves to be clasped. My friend, my ever dear brother Maurice, how thou art changed for me, nevertheless! I no

longer pronounce thy name but as that of a relic ; in entering thy chamber, I have somewhat the feeling of being in a church ; I hardly venture to touch thy books, thy clothes ! something sacred invests thee and all that was thine. Veneration comes after death, no doubt, by reason of immortality, that life *not destroyed, but changed*, which man receives from God, and which inspires a worship of religious love.

Never have things outside appeared to me so grand as at present. I have come back from a lonely walk, nothing but a few birds in the air, a few fowls on the grass.

Que mon désert est grand, que mon ciel est immense !
L'aigle, sans se lasser, n'en ferait pas le tour ;
Mille cités et plus tiendraient en ce contour ;
Et mon cœur n'y tient pas ; et par delà s'élance.
Où va-t-il ? où va-t-il ? Oh ! nommez-moi le lieu !
Il s'en va sur la route à l'étoile tracée ;
Il s'en va dans l'espace où vole la pensée ;
Il s'en va près de l'ange, il s'en va près de Dieu ! . . .

This is the day of St Louis, I must read his life. It is also the birthday of my friend at Rayssac who neglects me somewhat, and to whom I do not fail to offer a bouquet of her favourite flowers, the only ones I can send so far. These flowers are everlasting.

A letter from Saint-Martin near Les Coques. I am not so lonely as I supposed, and my thoughts have wandered in many different directions, still reposing, like a veritable bird, always on the same branch, God and Maurice. They return to these when they have made a circuit of all else. Nowhere can I find that inner satisfaction that I crave ; the second glance

brings disillusionment. Then at times tears follow, but a look towards Heaven checks and soothes them. I know what I owe to these divine exaltations, I know what I see in that supernatural brightness, and then my soul finds peace.

(No date).—*Picciola*, a flower that was the life, joy, sorrow, paradise, angel, perfume and light of a poor prisoner. So it is with a memory in my heart, a prisoner in life. The influence that Maurice exerts over me has effects that are powerful and yet conflicting, pain and joy. The joys are divine, those that I owe to him, and those that I believe in when I think of the future life, those that I see in my heart, as St Louis said about a mystery. The eternal bliss of Maurice's soul fills me with rapture, and make me forget his death: all my affection is nourished with that hope. O God, let me keep it! I have nothing better, I have no longer anything else. When we lose a friend in this world, we go and seek him in the other; we seek him in our happiness, and I will believe in that of Maurice, one of the souls chosen and elect; my confidence rests on his acts of piety and lastly on these words: *He who eats of my flesh and drinks of my blood shall enjoy eternal life.* This was his last food. Then why should I fear. Let us not lose courage in the face of these divine promises.

Oh! my poor Marie! I can only utter this cry at the news that has come from Nivernais. Dying and living, strange invalid! What could be more melancholy?

“My life is a kind of stormy twilight of which the end seems ever nearer. I am so near death, that for

these last three weeks that I have been here, I could not write a single word. I suffered greatly from this silence when I had so much to tell you. Oh ! Heavens, why cannot you come ? You alone could reconcile me to living."

I shall go, then, if I can ; I shall go and share the burden of that life she cannot support alone. God help us, for I feel very feeble also under this mountain of afflictions.

August 29th, 1840.—To-day I am plunged in deep regret at the loss of a peasant woman, old Rose Durel, who has just died. A true saint and Christian woman with all the simplicity of the Gospel. Her life was in her faith, her faith was that humble belief, without books or anything, that ancient primitive belief that is praised thus by the author of the *Imitation* : "A humble peasant who serves God is certainly far above the proud philosopher who, neglecting himself, attends to the course of the stars." Indeed there was noticeable in Rose a singular distinction of virtue and feeling, something superior to the highest education ; and when the scope of such a soul was considered and the little prompting she received, could one help saying that God alone raised her up thus ? Such was the opinion of Maurice, a lover of the beautiful, who could appreciate choice things and judge of souls ; he loved Rose, respected her like a female patriarch. When he came to this district, he never went away without going to see her, and sitting at her table ; for here we do not visit each other without eating, without tasting bread and wine. But on these occasions

Rose used to add to the repast, and exceeded her usual hospitality by some small dainty, some fine fruit, perhaps, kept for *Monsieur Maurice*, or some favourite dish of his. In all this there was a touching expression of affection, delicate and at the same time simple, which affected me still more in the preservation of a swallow's nest that little Maurice had committed to her care when he first went away from the place. "Let me find it there when I come back," he said; and he found it there. It is still there religiously preserved in the old planking of Rose's old room. Oh! monument!

CONVERSATIONS WITH A SOUL

Death only separates our bodies, it cannot draw our souls asunder. These were my words not long since when I stood beside a coffin, these are my words now, for my grief has not changed, any more than my hopes, these immortal hopes that alone sustain my heart and bind me to his, that link between Heaven and earth, between him and me. My friend, my dear Maurice! in these hopes we are together again, and my life returns to yours almost as in former days.¹

. . . . At what hour of the day or night were they born, in calm or tempest, what destiny awaited them, I mean, what was the course of their lives that God marks out for us and we fulfil? For I attribute nothing to destiny, that pagan divinity. What did they make of their understanding? To what use did they put it in the moral order? How

¹ Here four pages are removed.

did it rank in truth? Could they be counted as for Heaven, the abode of righteous souls? O God, do not call them yet, do not call them if they be not all in the path of righteousness. How that day of the dead strikes terror into us as we look upon death!

XII

All Saints' Day, 1840.—Two years ago, on this very day, at this very hour, in the Indian salon at Paris, the brother I love so much was talking with me confidentially about his life, his future, his approaching marriage, so many things which came from his heart and which he poured into mine. Ah ! these memories, how they are linked to the mournful and religious solemnity of this day, the day of the saints, the remembrance of the dead and of vanished friends ! It is for all that and I know not what else that I write, that I take up again this neglected Journal, this diary that he loved, that he told me to keep for him, and which I will indeed keep for Maurice in Heaven. If there are, as I believe, relations between this world and the other, if the abode of souls is akin to this, it must be that our life is still linked to those we lived with, they must share in our existence, in a spirit of divine love, they must take an interest in what we do. I feel as though Maurice saw all I did, and that helps me to do, now that he is gone, what I used to do when he was with me.

A day of prayers, on which we lift up our thoughts

on high, among the saints, those blessed ones who have found salvation. I have meditated over their lives. How glad I am to see that they were like us, and so we can be like them!

The Day of the Dead, 1840.—How different this day is from others, at church, in the soul, without, everywhere! We cannot find words for what we feel, what we think, what we recall, what we regret. There is no expression for all those but in prayer and in writing down our inmost thoughts. Here I have written nothing, but I have written to someone to whom I promised, as long as I lived, a letter on the Day of the Dead, alas!

November 6th, 1840.—To-day is Friday and the post day. I was awaiting I know not what, but I was awaiting something. And indeed there came a newspaper from Brittany, kindly sent by one of Maurice's friends. It is not that the heart rejoices in anything at all belonging to this world, but whatever concerns its sorrow rouses it, and therein it finds a certain content. M. de la Morvonnais, in speaking to me of Maurice, in sending me what he writes about him, affects me like one who lays offerings on a coffin.

November 9th, 1840.—Wrote to Louise, that friend of my youth, once gay, laughing and happy, who now says to me, "Console me." So none escape grief! O God, console all those suffering ones, all those sorrowing hearts that end by coming to rest on mine! "Write to me," they say, "your letters

do me good." Ah ! what good ? I find none for myself.

November 10th, 1840.—What have I done to-day ? Things enough, if I could only take some interest in telling them.

November 11th, 1840.—The moon is rising there on the horizon where I have watched it so often ; the wind is sighing at my window where I have heard it so often ; I look at my room, my table, my books, my papers, the hangings, the holy images, all that I have seen so often, and shall soon see no more. I am going away. Oh ! how I regret all that I leave here, and especially my father, my sister and my brother ! Who knows when I shall see them again, or if I shall ever see them again ? One runs so many dangers in travelling ! That road to Paris is so sad for me ! I feel as though misfortune awaited me at the end. What misfortune now ? I know not, and indeed nothing can equal what we have seen. That dear Maurice ! everything leads me to him, and even this journey has these associations. Mysterious and holy mission which I accomplish in his memory, with pain and love.

November 15th, 1840. — At this hour we were setting out for the Church of Abbaye-aux-Bois to hear the benediction pronounced on their marriage. It is two years since then, that day which remains imprinted on my heart. Oh ! Heavens ! Yes, God alone knows the thoughts this memory awakens ; great was the pleasure I took in this time, but greater is the suffer-

ing it costs me now. Since then all things are changed into mourning. It is thus I am setting out, that I am following once more the road to Paris, this memorable day. My sweet Le Cayla, my peaceful wilderness, farewell ! I regret unspeakably what I am leaving behind here, the life I am plucking up and which can no longer take root elsewhere. But a soul awaits me, a soul that God has given me, a treasure to keep for him. Come, it is God's will ! Let us set forth at this word like the Crusaders for the Holy Land. The sky is blue, the rooks are cawing ; a good omen and a bad one, if the rook forbodes anything. I do not believe it, and yet when we are leaving a place, we look at all things and feel all things with the common sensations.

For the last time I have attended to my bird and looked at the rose bush at my window, that little wandering rose that came from Nivernais. I have given it into my sister's care, as well as my gold-finch ; to my kind Marie, who will take care of the pot and the cage and all the dear objects I leave behind. To my father I entrust a box of papers, precious things that could not be better than under a father's care. There are others I cannot part with, which follow me like relics, dear papers belonging to Maurice, or written for him. This diary also I shall take ; but for whom ?

November 19th, 1840.—Farewell, Toulouse, where I have but stopped in passing to see the museum, the antiquarian collection, and so many memorials of Maurice. It was at Toulouse he began his studies at the little seminary. All the little boys I saw in black coats I took for him.

November 18th, 1840.—At Souillac, amidst rain, dismal rain. A journey without sunshine is one long sadness, and often life is nothing else.

November 21st, 1840.—Châteauroux, where I am sitting alone in a dark room, with a wall two feet from the window, like the prison of Spielberg ; like Pellico, I am writing on a wooden table. What am I writing ? What is one to write amidst the noise of an alien wind and the oppression of *ennui* ? On arriving here, on losing sight of the familiar faces in the diligence, I hurried into my room and threw myself on my bed in a fit of weariness and depression. The words are perhaps strong, but it is something that affects the brain and weighs upon the heart : to find myself *alone*, in a hotel, in a throng, is something so new, so strangely sad, that I cannot grow used to it. Oh ! if it were for long ! But to-morrow I go on my way, to-morrow I shall be near my friend, a joy of which I do not even wish to speak. At one time I would have told all. That time is dead.

Sleep and a short time spent at the church have calmed me. I have written to Le Cayla, that dear, sweet spot, where they are thinking of the wanderer as I think of them.

November 22nd, 1840.—Passed through Issoudun and the moorlands of Berry, and I thought of George Sand who lives there, not far from our road. That woman turns up often now in my life, like all that is connected in any way with Maurice. At Bourges in the evening, where on the dinner-table I wrote a letter home. I should have liked to visit the Cathedral

again and have a look at Charles V.'s prison ; but we arrived too late, and I should have had to go alone.

Nevers, December 4th, 1840.—My dear invalid is resting with her face to the wall. When I see her no more, what am I to see, what am I to look at in this room? My eyes turn only to Heaven and to her bed. Under these curtains I see all that I can love here. Perhaps I am too strongly affected at this bedside, in this room, this warm atmosphere of tears. To escape this I am going to take refuge in my writing, and in reading devotional books which strengthen me. As a sister of charity I must not fall ill.

December 5th, 1840.—Weaker and weaker, an utter listlessness that renders any distraction hopeless. Oh ! when the mind also is affected ! . . .

No company to-day, and so I have been able to read. I commenced Hoffmann's *Fantastic Tales*, which amuse me. It contains some piquant raillery, some biting sketches of men and things.

December 7th, 1840.—I have received a sealed packet from ***. Mournful and precious relics deposited in my heart with tears. It was the day of such trusts. On my own part and without any thought of imitation, since this was quite unexpected, I placed some papers of my own in the hands of a holy priest : I wanted his decision on a doubtful question. Oh ! my poor thoughts, that I no longer venture to judge ! May God judge them !

My poor friend ! She has spoken of receiving the sacraments and other preparations for death.

The little cross that I put round her neck pleased her, I saw her kiss it repeatedly. Alas! another, dying too, has pressed it to his lips.

December 10th, 1840.—A day of calm, talking, almost gaiety, animation. It is a good sign when the mind shows itself again.

December 11th, 1840. — My mind is at rest; the priest to whom I had given certain writings, or rather my heart and thoughts to judge, has given them back to me, not condemned, but approved, commended, better understood than I had understood them myself. Do we need someone else to reveal our merits? Yes, when we have an ignorant mind and a timid heart.

Saint Martin, 1840.—Read, write, what am I to do in my room so well arranged in every way to suit my taste? A good fire, books, a table with pen, ink and paper, materials and inducements. Let us write. But what? Ah! this little Journal that will continue my thoughts and my life, a life now out of its usual course, as though our brook were to find itself transported to the banks of the Loire, that Loire, that country, that I seemed destined never to see, so far off was I born. But God has brought me here. I cannot help seeing Providence as clear as the light of day in certain events of my life, not but that it is concerned in all, more or less manifest.

With a little more inclination for writing I might have set down here a long account of my stay at Saint Martin, so beautiful, so grand with its park

and its lovely waters. I have seen few places so striking, so remarkable both by nature and art. It is plain that Lenôtre has been here. I shall depart with the sweetest and most agreeable memories, of the inside as much as of the outside; a charming family into which I am adopted, where I have received the most touching proofs of affection, an affection so true because it is disinterested. What have they to gain from loving me? Nothing but to be loved in their turn and to draw upon themselves the blessing of God. Oh! how sweet that would be to me, did I not think of Maurice, to whom I owe this happiness I am enjoying after his death. I wanted to see his room; I did not take a step in the chapel, in the garden, in the salon, where he had not been. Alas! we but walk in the footsteps of the dead.

The last day of December, 1840.—Ah! what a sad thing time is, whether it is coming or going! And how just are the words of the saint who said: "Let us cast our hearts upon eternity!"

THE END.

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